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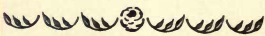
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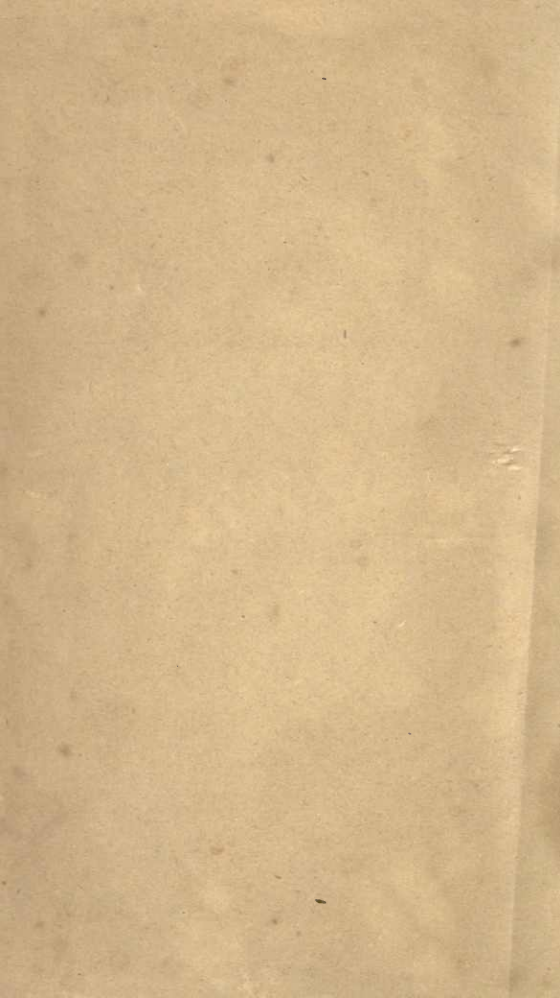
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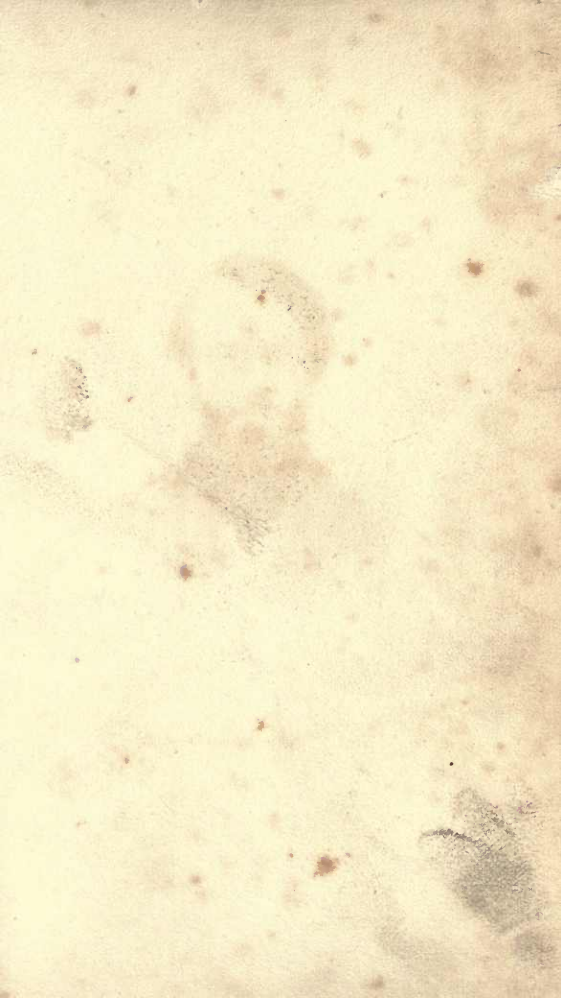
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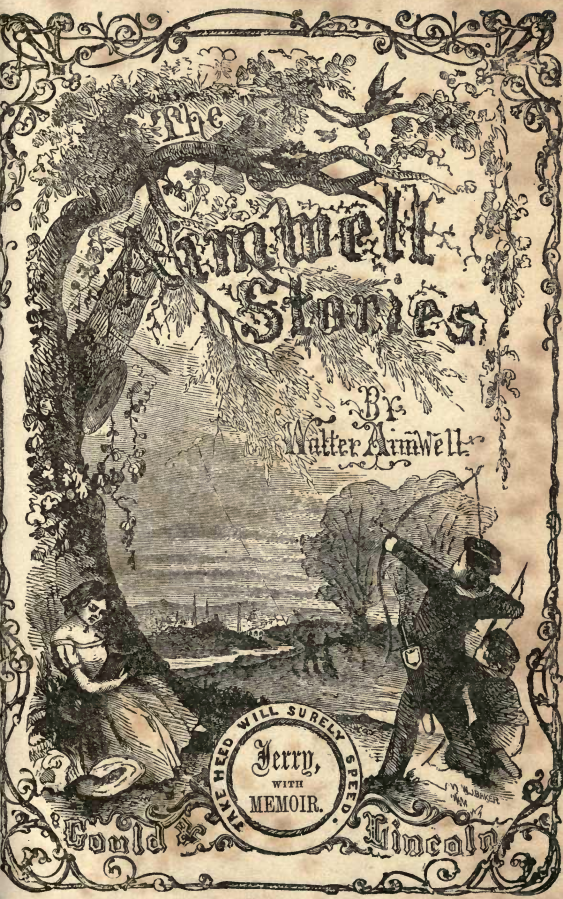
Walter Ainswell.

# The Aimwell Stories

By  
Walter Aimwell

THE HEED WILL SURELY SPEED.  
Jerry,  
WITH  
MEMOIR.

Could Lincoln







*THE UNFINISHED VOLUME.*

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JERRY;

OR,

THE SAILOR BOY ASHORE.

BEING

THE SEVENTH—A FRAGMENT—IN THE SERIES  
OF THE “AIMWELL STORIES.”

BY

WALTER AIMWELL.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

*A Memoir of the Author, with a Likeness.*

BOSTON:

GOULD AND LINCOLN,

59 WASHINGTON STREET.

NEW YORK: SHELDON AND COMPANY.

CINCINNATI: GEORGE S. BLANCHARD.

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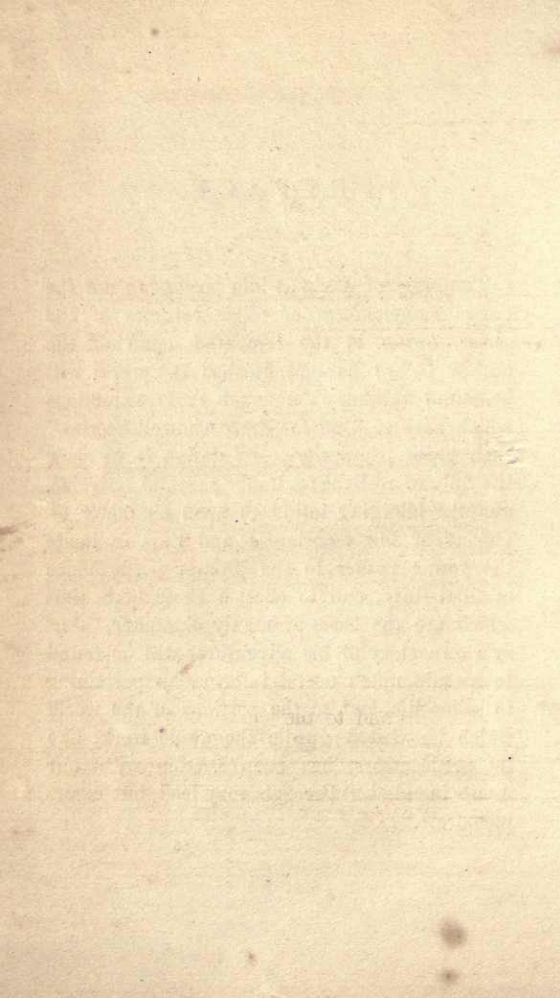
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## P R E F A C E .

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THE story of JERRY, while possessing not the entire completeness of other volumes of the series, owing to the lamented death of the author before he had finished the work, will be found wanting in none of those attractions which have secured for the "Aimwell Stories" their great popularity. Its design is to show the folly of restiveness under parental restraint, and the blighting influence upon character of vicious or low associates; and thus to incite the young reader to the prompt performance of filial duty, and to cherish those high aims which are the basis of manly character. Jerry's own story of his adventures will be found to contain much useful information pertaining to sailor life, and to the portions of the world which he visited; while the whole work, like its predecessors, has been written with our motto in mind, "Precepts may lead, but examples draw."



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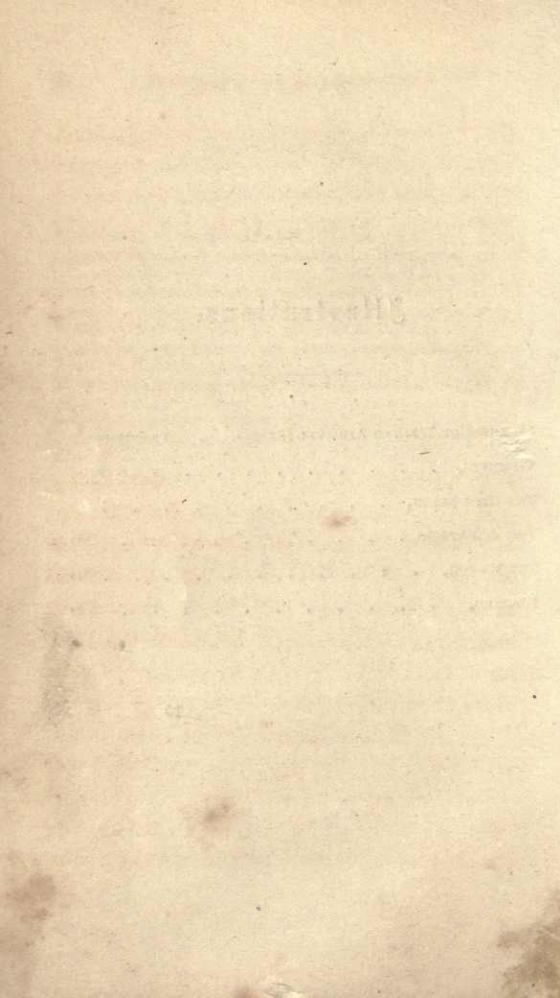
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# J E R R Y .

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE RUNAWAY'S RETURN.

“**I** WISH I could look out and see father coming ; here it is the tenth of the month, and he ought to have got home a week ago. February, March, April, May, — it’s over three months since father went off, and he said he should be back by the first of May. I can’t imagine what has become of him. There’s the doctor coming, I believe. Yes, that’s his wagon. He’s got a man with him — who knows but it’s father ? No, it’s a young fellow. I wonder who it is. He’s as black as an Indian ; and he’s casting up sheep’s-eyes at me, too. Well, I don’t care for you, whoever you are.”

The doctor’s wagon stopped, and so did the busy tongue whose words we have been repeating. The



doctor alighted, and walked into the house without ceremony; and Emily, the proprietor of the tongue aforesaid, flattened her little nose against the chamber-window in her efforts to look down upon the young stranger, who remained seated in the wagon.

"Why, it's somebody that mother knows," Emily added, after a few moments' pause; "she has run out to the wagon, and she's hugging and kissing him, and he kissed her! Oh, I know now who it is, — it's Jerry! it's Jerry!" and the girl, half crazed with excitement, jumped from her seat and ran to the door.

"I'm going, too," said Harriet, her younger sister, springing toward the door.

"No," said Emily, holding the door fast; "you mustn't go now; it won't do to leave the baby. I'll come right back in a minute, and let you go."

"I want to go now; mother told *you* to tend the baby," replied Harriet, beginning to snivel.

"You may both go, children, and I'll see to the baby," said Dr. Hart, who suddenly opened the door upon them.

The two girls ran down-stairs as fast as possible, without stopping to thank the doctor for his kindness. And, sure enough, it was Jerry, their long-lost brother, who

ran away from home fifteen months previous to this time, and had long been regarded as dead. He seemed very glad to see his sisters, and greeted them each with a good "sailor's smack," as he termed it.

"And so you thought I shouldn't know you, sitting in the doctor's wagon," said Mrs. Preston. "Don't you think it must be a queer mother that doesn't know her own son?"

"That was the doctor's notion; it wasn't mine," replied Jerry. "He overhauled me on the road, and offered to give me a ride; but he didn't know me until I told him where I was going. He looked at me pretty sharp, and then says he, 'Why, ain't you Mr. Preston's son?' and I told him I believed I was. Then he said he had got to come here, to see the baby; but he told me I had better sit in the wagon while he was making his call, because everybody thought I was dead, and there would be quite a scene when I made myself known, and he didn't wish to intrude upon it."

"Your father thought you dead, but I never gave you up," said Mrs. Preston. "Just as soon as I laid eyes on you I knew you. I asked the doctor whom he had got there, and he looked so queer when he said it was 'a young friend of his from out of town,' that I was certain then that it was you."

Jerry now went up-stairs with his mother and sisters, and the doctor introduced him to his new brother, the baby, who had been quite ill, but was now getting better.

“You don’t seem to think much of your baby brother,” said Mrs. Preston, observing that he took but little notice of it.

“Yes, I do,” replied Jerry; “but I can’t help thinking about Mary. I didn’t know she was dead until Uncle Henry told me yesterday, and I can’t realize it. I keep looking around, expecting to see her; it doesn’t seem natural without her.”

The mention of the name of Mary brought a shade of sadness to every face, but no one seemed inclined to speak further of the departed. Jerry was more attached to Mary than to either of his other sisters. She was the youngest, and was but six years old when she died. Her death took place only a few weeks after Jerry left home; but as he had not heard of it, and always thought of her as living, it was nearly the same to him as though she had but just died.

The doctor soon withdrew, and Mrs. Preston went down to the kitchen to get something for Jerry to eat, for he had fasted since the night before, and it was now toward the middle of the afternoon. Jerry followed her,

promising his sisters that if they would remain with the baby he would shortly return and answer the thousand questions they were so impatient to ask him. As soon as Jerry was alone with his mother, he commenced making a confession to her.

“Mother,” he said, “running away from home was the worst day’s work I ever did. I was a fool to do it, and I’ve got pretty well punished for it. You’ve no idea what a hard time I’ve had. I gave myself up for dead more than once; but I’ll tell you about that this evening, perhaps, when we’re all together. I meant to have brought money enough home to pay back what I took, but I lost everything when we were wrecked.”

“No matter about that,” said Mrs. Preston; “we never shall think of that again, so long as you have got home alive.”

“What do you suppose father will say to me?” inquired Jerry, with some hesitation; for he had serious doubts as to the kind of reception his father would give him.

“He will think you have risen from the dead; I don’t believe he has the least idea that you’re in the land of the living,” replied his mother, evading a direct answer to the question.

“Do you suppose he will be glad to see me?” inquired Jerry.

“Certainly I do; I can’t imagine how it could be otherwise,” replied Mrs. Preston. After a moment’s pause, she added, “Your father is peculiar about some things; he doesn’t always show his feelings. But I’ve no doubt he’ll be as rejoiced as any of us at your return, whether he says so or not.”

Jerry sat silently speculating upon this reply to his question, while his mother was busy in pantry and cellar, collecting all the good things in the house to prepare a feast for the returned prodigal. To tell the truth, he had serious doubts whether his father would be glad to see him, for he was a stern and seemingly cold man, who did not look with much charity upon the faults of others, and was slow to forgive those who had offended him.

Mr. Preston divided his time between farming and logging. In the summer, he carried on his farm, in the small and retired town of Brookdale. In the fall, he went into the forests in the northern part of Maine, where he usually remained until spring. A gang of men accompanied him, and they formed a camp in the woods, where they lived all winter in a very primitive way. Their business was to cut down trees, trim off the

branches, and haul the logs to the river. On the breaking up of the ice in the spring, these logs were floated down the stream to the mill, where they were sawn into lumber.

It was during his father's absence at the logging camp that Jerry ran away from his home. He was at that time nearly fourteen years old. He had for some time been growing lazy, restless, and unmanageable, so that his mother could not do much with him. His character had suffered greatly from intimacy with a cousin of his, about a year older than himself, named Oscar Preston. Oscar belonged in Boston, but falling into bad habits, his father thought it would benefit him to send him away from the city for a season. So he lived with his uncle's family, in Brookdale, for several months. His character did not improve, however, and he was finally obliged to leave the State to avoid trial on a charge of setting fire to a woodlot, his father at the same time paying over one hundred dollars, damages and costs, to effect his release.

When his cousin returned to Boston, Jerry grew lonesome, uneasy, and unhappy. He wanted to go to sea, or to travel over the country, or to live in some great city; anywhere, he thought, he could be happier than at home. His father would not hear a word on the subject, and his



mother would not give the slightest encouragement to any such whims. So, at length, he concluded to shake off parental authority; and one Sunday morning, soon after the rest of the family started for church, he hastily gathered up a bundle of clothing, and set out on a longer journey than he then imagined.<sup>1</sup>

There was one act, connected with Jerry's flight from home, which he had always regretted, and which, more than anything else, made him dread to meet his father. On going off, he took with him every cent of money in the house, — the allowance which Mr. Preston had left for the necessities of the family during his absence. Conscience began to reprove Jerry for his theft as soon as he had leisure to think about the matter, and he resolved to pay back the whole amount out of his first earnings. When, after a few days, *his* pockets were picked clean, and nearly every dollar of his mother's money went into the hands of a second thief, the wickedness and folly of his own offence were still more deeply impressed on his mind. He came back to his father's house not merely a runaway, but a thief.

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller account of Jerry's early career, and his flight from home, the reader is referred to the first and second volumes of this series, "Oscar" and "Clinton."



Mrs. Preston, notwithstanding her reply to Jerry's last question, had some slight misgivings in regard to the reception his father would give him. She knew that Mr. Preston, whatever he may have felt, had never manifested any relentings or parental yearnings toward his lost son in her presence, though she had been told that he had evinced some feeling when conversing about him with others. But, so far as she could judge, he had never forgiven his erring boy's last offence. He seldom alluded to Jerry in the family, and when he did, he spoke of him only as a lazy, heartless, and ungrateful boy, who was bent on evil, and he was seemingly quite indifferent as to whether he ever came back again or not. Even when news came of the wreck of Jerry's vessel and his supposed loss, he exhibited no feeling, though, for many days after, he was unusually silent and reserved, and seemed to take little notice of what was going on around him. From that day, he never alluded to his son, except once or twice, when he tried to convince his wife of the folly of expecting ever to see him again. The wayward boy was dead and buried to him, and, so far as human eye could see, few paternal sighs and tears were called forth by his untimely end.

The table was soon spread, and Jerry ate a hearty

meal. How delicious mother's light bread and sweet butter tasted to the hungry wanderer, so long used to the sailor's coarse fare ! And what a treat was a tumbler of new, rich milk, after drinking ship-water and sea-slops for over a year !

As soon as the family could all get together, after supper, Jerry spun his "yarn," as he called it, and gave them a brief account of his adventures during the fifteen months of his absence. His narrative follows in the succeeding chapters.

## CHAPTER II.

### JERRY BEGINS HIS STORY.

“**N**OW I’ll spin that yarn, if you would like to hear it,” said Jerry, after tea. “I suppose you don’t want to hear about the voyage out, for nothing very remarkable happened, only we came amazing near getting wrecked, and I believe I wrote you something about it.”

“Yes, begin at the beginning, and tell us the whole story,” said Emily, and Hattie seconded the request.

“It would take me more than a week to do that,” replied Jerry, “if I talked as fast as I could. I can’t tell the *whole* story now ; but I’ll tell you about some of the most important events of the voyage, and save the rest for another time.

“Well, I went straight to Boston, after I left home, and the first thing I did was to try to get a chance to go to sea. As luck would have it, I fell in with the brig Susan, bound for Valparaiso, just as she was hauling off from the wharf. They had shipped a boy the day before, but he went ashore, and hadn’t come back, and

the captain told me I might take his place. So I bundled right in, without stopping to think. I didn't know the name of the vessel, nor where she was bound, nor what wages I was to have, nor anything else. I only knew I was going to sea, and that was all I cared about.

“Before I got out of sight of land, I began to be dreadful seasick; but it isn't worth while to tell you about that now. And, if you'll believe me, the very first job I had to do, on board the Susan, was to clear out the pigsty! and I had to do it every day through the voyage!”

“Why, do they have pigsties on board vessels?” inquired Harriet.

“Yes, sometimes,” continued Jerry. “But our pigs were not to be killed for fresh meat,—they were a choice kind, that somebody was sending out to Valparaiso for breeding. But I thought it was rather queer, after I had run away from home to get rid of such work, that I should have to feed pigs and clean out their pen at sea. And it wasn't many days, I tell you, before I wished myself home again. Everybody, from the captain down, cursed and cuffed and kicked me, because I was so green,—just as if I ought to have known every rope of the brig, when I never saw a brig before. If I didn't

happen to do a thing just right, down would come a rope's-end across my shoulders, as like as not ; and if I dared to say a word, I would find myself sprawling on the deck the next minute. The men, too, played off all sorts of tricks upon me.<sup>1</sup> And then the living was enough to sicken anybody. It was salt beef and hard bread morning, noon, and night, and week after week, only, once in a while, we were treated with stewed beans or peas, or boiled rice, or duff,—a kind of pudding made of flour. And I wish you could have seen the place where we slept. The forecastle is the name of it. It was a little, narrow, dark, and dirty hole, with berths on the sides, like shelves, where the men slept. Why, our cock-loft is a perfect parlor compared with it."

"No wonder you wished yourself home, poor fellow !" said Mrs. Preston.

"Well, after all, mother," continued Jerry, "it wasn't so dreadful bad, when a fellow got used to it. In a few weeks I kind of got the hang of things, and made

<sup>1</sup> Probably Jerry's "breaking-in" at sea was a little severer than it would have been if he had learned to obey at home. With his lazy and disobedient habits, no doubt it took some hard knocks to make him understand that no shirking was allowed on board the Susan, but that every order and every duty must be performed promptly and good-naturedly.

the best of them, and after that I got along a good deal easier. My sea-sickness went off, and I could eat my allowance with the smartest of them, salt-junk or anything they'd a mind to bring on. The weather was fine for several weeks; we'd got into a warm latitude, and the old



brig made a handsome run. There was one time that we didn't shorten sail once for a week,— she kept right along on her course, with a fair wind, without starting tack or sheet. We had

some rare sport, too, about that time. We killed a shark that was hanging around the brig, for one thing. One of the men heated a brick as hot as he could, and then wrapped it up in some greasy cloths, and chucked it to him. Sharks, you know, will jump at anything you throw at them, and this fellow smelt the grease, and down went the brick, before you could say Jack Robinson. And then you ought to have seen him thrash round. Why, it looked as if the water was boiling, where he was, he lashed it so, and the spray came down upon us like a shower. But in a few minutes it was all over, and his ugly carcass rose to the top and floated off."



“ Oh, that was cruel ! ” said Mrs. Preston.

“ Well, mother, the sharks are cruel, too,” said Jerry; “ and the sailors don’t have any love for them, I can tell you. The rascals would eat a man just as quick as anything else, if they could get a chance. They’d snap a leg off just as a boy bites a stick of candy, and they’d finish the rest of him in two or three mouthfuls.

“ A day or two after that, we caught an albatross. There were several of them that had been following us three or four days. They are a curious bird. They are very large, and their wings opened from twelve to fifteen feet.

We sailed at the rate of about two hundred miles a day, for several days running, and yet these birds kept up with us all the time. But they went



more than double the distance that we did, because they kept making circles round us for miles, and then coming back in our wake. They follow vessels to pick up the stuff that is thrown overboard. One of our men baited a hook with a piece of salt pork, and towed it from the stern by a strong line. In a few minutes one of the birds swallowed the bait, and we pulled him on deck.



He was a monstrous fellow, but he didn't try to defend himself only by biting at us a little. He was so clumsy he couldn't stand up on the deck. He had great webbed feet. The sailors began to skin his feet, to make purses, before the poor fellow was dead."

"Oh, what hard-hearted wretches!" exclaimed Emily.

"Well, I must hurry along with my yarn," said Jerry, "or I shan't get through to-night. We crossed the line, — the equator, I suppose you call it, — and I was introduced to King Neptune, and was shaved and washed by him in great style; but I can't stop to tell you about that, now. Every greenhorn has to go through the ceremony the first time he crosses the line. We didn't have any very rough weather till after we had passed Cape St. Roque. Do you know where that is, Emily? Get your atlas, and I'll show you."

Emily brought her school atlas, and found Cape St. Roque, the extreme eastern point of South America, about five degrees below the equator.

"A day or two after we passed the cape," continued Jerry, "it grew rough and stormy, and finally settled down into a regular gale. The sea ran as high as the mast-head, and I thought we should be swallowed up

every moment. The brig lay down on her side so that you couldn't stand still nor walk without holding on to something. The wind blew terribly, the rain poured down in torrents, the sea dashed over the deck, and every rope and plank seemed to creak as though the brig was just going to pieces. It was pretty shaky business, I can tell you, going up aloft then, and hanging to the yards and ropes, but we had to do it. And for two days we didn't one of us get any rest or put on a rag of dry clothing. In the height of the storm, our maintop and topgallant masts, with the yards and rigging, came down with a crash to the deck, and nearly killed one of the crew. I thought our time had come then, certainly, but we cut away the wreck, and made everything all snug again. Soon after that, the captain discovered that we had sprung a leak, and all hands had to take their turn at the pumps. That came pretty hard, worn out as we were, but it was pump or sink with us, and there was no get-off.

“The next day after we sprung a leak, the gale began to die away, and our captain made up his mind to run into Rio for repairs. Do you know where that is, Emily?”

“Rio Janeiro? Yes; here it is, — it's the capital of Brazil,” replied Emily, looking upon the map.

“That’s the place I wrote my first letter from,” resumed Jerry. “We lay by there about a week, and had a chance to go ashore. It was the last of March, but it was the latter part of their summer. When it’s winter here, it’s summer there. We had plenty of fruit while we stopped there, — such as oranges, plantains, pineapples, bananas, and mangoes. And the monkeys and parrots that we saw there I guess would have made you open your eyes. They say they grow wild in the woods there. Just as soon as we got anchored, the natives began to come out in canoes, with fruits and poultry and monkeys and parrots and all sorts of knickknacks, to sell. Rio looks real handsome from the water, but it’s a queer place when you get into it. The houses are high, and most of the streets are so narrow that two carriages can’t pass without running upon the sidewalk. The streets are full of slaves, and they seem to do all the work. You will see them with great boxes and bales on their backs, and they take the place of horses and drag heavy carts loaded with goods. A party of us walked out into the country one day; and such splendid forests as we saw I never had any idea of before. The trees were nearly all strange to us, and there was no end to the different kinds. Everything grows rank there. The woods

were full of the handsomest birds I ever saw, and there was about every kind of insect that ever was thought of, I should think.

“After we left Rio, we made a pretty good run, until we got in the neighborhood of Cape Horn, and then we had a rough time of it for five weeks. It was about the first of May when we rounded the cape, which is the beginning of winter there. The days were short and cold, and we had gales and rain, snow or hail storms, pretty much all the time. It’s the stormiest place I ever got into. One night we saw a bright-red light in the west, that seemed to be only ten or twelve miles off; but the captain said it was all of a hundred miles distant. It was a burning volcano, in Terra del Fuego. The next day we saw land, for the first time since we left Rio. It was the coast of Terra del Fuego and Staten Land, and it was about as desolate a looking place as you can imagine. It was rocky, mountainous, and barren, and the sight of it was enough to give a fellow the blues.

“Cape Horn itself is a great black rock, high and steep, and extending out into the sea. We were within sight of it when we passed it. It is a terrible bleak place. We had about a dozen hail and snow storms that

day, and they say it's always rough there, where the two oceans meet. Our decks and shrouds and rigging were coated with ice, and the sails were as stiff as sheet-iron. We were all glad enough when we knew we were in the Pacific Ocean; but we hadn't got through our troubles even then, for we had a very rough time, for two or three weeks, in sailing up the coast. About all the amusement we had at that time was catching cape pigeons, which followed us in great flocks. We caught them with a hook, just as we did the albatross. They look very much like our common pigeons, only they are web-footed.

“Well, at last we dropped our anchor in the bay of Valparaiso, in a little more than three months from the time we left Boston. Here it is,—it's the capital of Chili,” added Jerry, pointing out its location on the map. “It isn't so pleasant a place as Rio. The main part of the town is built along the beach, for about two miles. Right back of the city there is high land, where most of the foreign merchants live. There are three hills that rise above the southern end of the city, which they call the ‘Fore,’ ‘Main,’ and ‘Mizzen Tops.’ This is where the sailors go on their sprees, after they are paid off. They drink and fight and gamble and rob and commit

every sin you can think of. I suppose some of the worst dens in the world are on those hills."

"I hope you kept clear of such places," said Mrs. Preston, rather anxiously.

"Oh, you needn't be afraid to risk me, mother," replied Jerry; "I didn't have much to do with them, I can assure you. I went around among them a little, just to see what sort of places they were, that's all."

"But you couldn't go near such places without danger; it's contaminating to approach them," replied his mother.

"I don't think they harmed me much," continued Jerry; "but one of our crew got drunk, up on the Main Top, and was robbed of all his wages, and then pitched head-first down the precipice, and almost killed. I guess he won't forget the Main Top very soon."

"When we arrived at Valparaiso, the crew were discharged; but the captain said he wanted me to stay with the brig, and so I did. We didn't know where we should go next, as we had no cargo engaged. We some expected to go to San Francisco, but freights were dull, and after waiting about four weeks, the captain finally engaged a cargo of hides for Boston. It took about a



fortnight to load and get ready for sea, so our whole stop in Valparaiso was about six weeks."

Here we will pause, and resume Jerry's narrative in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER III.

### JERRY CONTINUES HIS STORY.

“WE sailed from Valparaiso on the 4th of July,” continued Jerry. “I was in hopes we should stay in port one day more, for the Americans were going to have a jolly celebration of Independence; but we were all ready, and the wind was fair, so we sailed early in the morning. It was the middle of winter, but we had not seen any ice, and it was about as warm as it is here in October. We soon got into colder weather, though. I remember one night, when we were a few days out, the air grew very cold, and we discovered an immense iceberg right in our track. It was all of a hundred and fifty feet high, above water, and I should think it must have been a mile round it. We made out just to clear it, and that was all. There had been a thick fog for a day or two before, and if we had come across the iceberg then, we should have gone pell-mell right into it, and I reckon that would have been the end of us. Perhaps it would have been better for us if we

had run into it, for the weather was calm, and we were near the coast, and might have saved ourselves in the boats.

“We made a pretty good run down the coast till we got into the neighborhood of the Horn, and then our troubles began again. We were beating about, off the cape, for about a month, before we got around it; and all the time it was cold, stormy, and rough. It was more wintry, and the days were shorter, than when we first doubled the cape. But we finally got into the Atlantic, and began to steer north. We thought the worst of the voyage was over now, and we did have very good luck until we got into the latitude of the Rio de la Plata. Do you know where that is, Emily?”

Emily readily found the river on her map.

“It’s a stormy region,” resumed Jerry. “They have a terrible kind of tempest, called a pampero, and we got caught in one. The day before it broke upon us, the weather was fine and the sea quite calm. Toward night, red and angry-looking clouds began to gather in the west, and now and then there was a flash of lightning. A slight breeze sprung up, but the air was hot and stifling, and the captain said we should have a tough blow, and set us to taking in sail. The gale commenced

about sunset, and *such* a gale I don't believe any of us ever saw before. It was perfectly furious, and that doesn't half tell the story. The thunder rolled awfully, without stopping for a moment. The lightning seemed almost to scorch us, it was so near and so sharp. The wind blew a hurricane, and the sea ran mountains high, and broke over the deck, sweeping off everything in its way."

"Didn't it rain, too?" inquired Harriet; "you didn't say anything about rain."

"Well, I don't know whether it rained or not," replied Jerry. "It was impossible to tell, the spray was dashing over us so, all the time. I suppose it did rain, though, and in torrents, too. After two or three hours, it was impossible to do anything. Two of the men were washed away from the deck and lost; and a fellow couldn't keep on deck, unless he was lashed to something. The rigging began to blow away like cobwebs, and we lost most of our sails and spars, and finally the head of the rudder and wheel were broken, so that we lost all control over the brig. Pretty soon after this, she canted over on her beam-ends, so that the upper lee-rail — the rail is the top of a vessel's sides, that rises above the deck — was all of two feet under water.

"All hands were now called into the after-cabin, as that was the safest place. In the fore-castle, where the sailors slept, the water was up to the lower berths. We were a sober set of fellows, then, I can assure you. There we were, huddled together, expecting every moment to go down. Nobody said anything, but I guess most of us kept up a terrible thinking. I know I did, for one ; I thought of everything I'd ever done. The captain kept watching the barometer, and down, down, down it kept going till after midnight. But at last it stopped falling, and in about an hour after that it began to rise. That was a sign that the worst of the storm was over ; and we began to have a little hope, now, that we might escape, after all. Pretty soon the wind changed, and about daybreak the brig righted herself, and we went on deck to see how matters stood.

"Well, we found it was indeed a pretty sad case. The tempest was not so furious as it had been, but our brig was a complete wreck. Nothing was left of the foremast above the foretop, and the spars and rigging of the mainmast had all disappeared, and only a stump of the mast was left. The jib-boom was carried away and bowsprit sprung. The galley and poop were stove, too. We found there was four feet of water in the hold,

and our water and provisions were nearly all spoilt. And, to crown all, we were drifting directly toward a reef, about two miles off, where the surf was breaking in a terrible fashion. Wasn't that a pretty fix? The first thing the captain did was to try to mend the rudder; but we couldn't do anything with it. Then he said we must abandon the brig or we should be dashed to pieces on the rocks.

"We had lost a small boat in the gale, but, luckily for us, we had two larger ones that were safe. We got these ready, and stowed away provisions, water, sails, and compasses, in them. Five of us then got into one of the boats, by the captain's orders. The mate took charge of it, and the captain told him what course to take. The captain and the rest of the crew, and the three passengers that were on board, — nine in all, — took the other boat, which was a life-boat. Our boat came near getting swamped when we launched it, and, in fact, we expected to be dashed to pieces before we got clear of the brig. But, as good luck would have it, both boats got off from the wreck without losing a man."

"Not good luck, my son," said Mrs. Preston, "but good Providence; the hand of God was certainly in it."

"Well, call it good Providence, — it's all the same," replied Jerry.

“No, no, don’t say so,” replied his mother, with a reproving look and tone; for she was pained to hear him speak so lightly of the Almighty One who had delivered him from his perils.

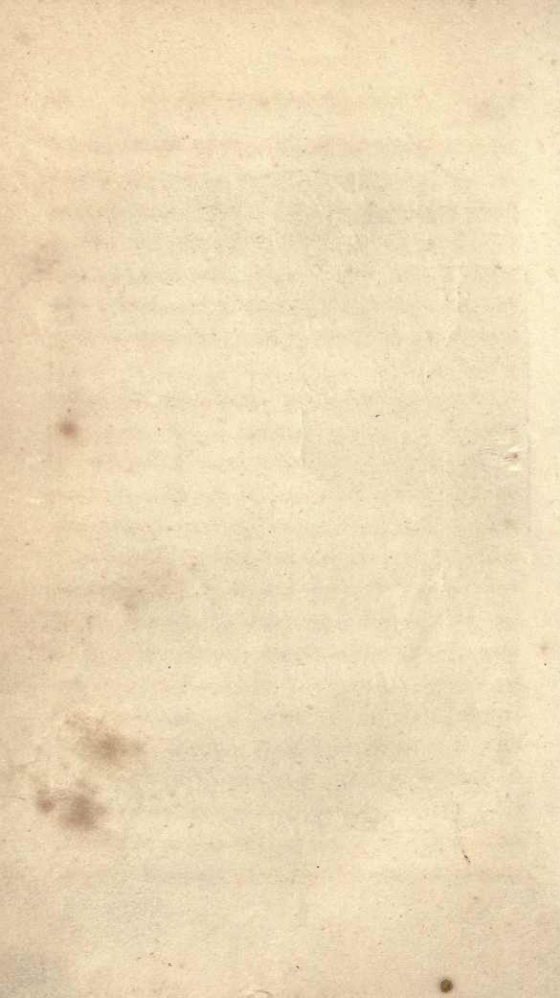
“As I was saying,” resumed Jerry, “both boats got clear of the wreck. We didn’t know exactly where we were, but we thought we were not within two or three hundred miles of the coast. The reef the brig was driving upon was a barren island. It was very rocky, and the cliffs rose up, almost perpendicular, nearly two hundred feet, I should think. There was no chance to land, that we could see, even if the weather had been calm. The brig drifted toward the island very fast after we left her, and the last we saw of her, she was thumping upon the rocks, and just ready to go to pieces.

“The weather cleared off finely after sunrise, and the change in the wind made the sea a good deal smoother, so that we could manage the boats pretty well. We saw two or three vessels the day before the hurricane, and we kept a sharp lookout, in hopes we should fall in with one of them. We pulled toward land, and kept within sight of the captain’s boat all that day; but the next morning we could see nothing of her, although we took the course the captain gave us. We concluded, at last,









that they had gone down ; but it seems they were picked up by a ship bound for New Orleans, three days after the wreck, and brought home. We didn't know anything about that, however, till we got to Boston. And it seems, too, they thought we had gone down ; for they say the ship cruised around a day or two, hunting after us, and they finally concluded we had gone to Davy Jones's locker."

"Where's that?" inquired Harriet, reaching for the atlas.

"You won't find it there, sis, — it's in the bottom of the sea," replied Jerry. "And, in fact, we did come pretty near going there," he continued. "Our boat couldn't stand a rough sea half as well as theirs, and if we hadn't had two or three first-rate seamen, I don't believe we'd have lived through it. As it was, we got drenched and almost smothered by the sea. All the bread we had was soaking wet with salt water, and we had nothing else to eat but a little junk and rice, and there was no chance to cook them. But the worst thing that happened to us was the losing of our compass. We lost it the first night out. A heavy sea broke over us, and carried away our rudder and one oar and several other things from the boat, among them the compass.

We came very near broaching to and upsetting several times during the night, and although this was the second night we had been without sleep, we couldn't get a moment's rest, for it took all of us to manage the boat.

"The next day the sea was a good deal smoother, and we rigged up a mast and hoisted a sail, and steered with an oar toward land. From dawn till night we kept a sharp lookout for the other boat, but we didn't see any signs of her, or of anything else. We got a little sleep, by turns, that day. The third day we began to feel rather blue. So much of our bread was spoilt that we put ourselves upon short allowance. We were sore and stiff and weak, and the sun beat down upon us hot enough to roast us almost. We kept straining our eyes all day, hoping to discover a sail, but we saw nothing. We didn't look for land yet, for we knew we must be a great way from the coast."

"You said you were only about two or three hundred miles from shore when you were wrecked," remarked Mrs. Preston; "I should think you might have sailed that distance in five or six days."

"I said we must have been at least two or three hundred miles from shore when we were wrecked," replied

Jerry, "but I didn't know how much more. The pampero drove us out of our course, and the captain had no chance to take an observation, and find where we were, after the gale commenced. Besides, after we took to the boat, we didn't make much progress. The first day, the sea ran so high that about all we could do was to keep the boat on the top of the waves. After that, we were so used up that we couldn't row but little; and as our boat was an old tub of a concern, and we had but one small sail, and the wind was almost in our faces, no wonder we didn't get along very fast.

"Well, we crept along in this way for about a week, and didn't see the least sign of a sail until the morning of the eighth day. I shall never forget that day, as long as I live. About the middle of the forenoon, we discovered the least speck of a sail, away off in the east, and we soon found she was steering north. We hoisted a signal of distress, and began to pull toward her with all our might. You never saw fellows work harder than we did. A little while before, we could hardly handle an oar; but now strength seemed to come to us, and we pulled away as though we were as fresh and strong as need be. We kept it up for nearly three hours, but at last we found it was of no use, and gave up the race.

The sail gained on us, and by noon she was out of sight."

"Oh, that was too bad," said Mrs. Preston. "Don't you suppose anybody in the vessel saw you?"

"No, I suppose not," said Jerry. "We didn't get within four miles of them, and our boat was so small that they couldn't have seen us unless they happened to turn their glass toward us. But it was a terrible disappointment to us. Some of the fellows raved like madmen, and cursed the vessel and everybody that was in it. Others were so down in the mouth that they couldn't say a word. As for me, I actually went to crying, — a thing I hadn't done before since the last time I" —

— "Got licked at school," Jerry was about to add; but just then bethinking himself of sundry tear-drawing admonitions he had received in his earlier service on board the Susan, he concluded not to finish the sentence.

"Well, no wonder we acted strangely," continued Jerry. "We were just as weak as children. As soon as we lost all hope of getting on board the vessel, our strength went off just as suddenly as it came. We thought we'd give up then, — we didn't care what became of us. So we floated along, just where the wind and current carried us, the rest of that day and night.

But the next morning we discovered an island, five or six miles off, and that roused us up a little. We steered toward it, and concluded we'd land and see if we could find anything to eat."

Here a sharp and sudden cry from the baby, in the bedroom, called Mrs. Preston away for a few minutes, and interrupted the narrative.



## CHAPTER IV.

### JERRY ENDS HIS STORY.

AS soon as Mrs. Preston had quieted the baby to sleep, she returned, and Jerry resumed his story.

“We had got almost to the island, when I stopped,” he continued. “We found it was a pretty mean-looking place. It was rocky and barren, and there were but few trees, and not much of anything that was green. It was about two miles long, and half a mile wide. We landed without much trouble, and pulled our boat into a safe place on the beach, and then scattered about to see what we could find. We were glad enough to stand on solid ground once more, I can tell you, even if it was a desolate island. We had been cramped up in the boat so long that we had almost lost the use of our legs; but we contrived to get along, after a fashion. We divided into three parties, and explored the island thoroughly. But we didn’t find much to reward us. The only living things we saw were a few sea-birds, which had their nests in the rocks on the south side. We did not find any-



thing fit to eat, except some muscles, and a kind of crab, and the eggs of the birds. The mate had pulled up some roots, that he thought we could eat rather than starve, but they didn't have a very inviting taste, and none of us knew but they were poisonous. We didn't find any fresh water on the island.

“After we had all come together again, we talked over matters, and decided to camp on the island awhile, and watch for a sail. We were afraid we were off the common track of vessels. But this seemed to be the best thing we could do. We were nearly out of water, and our bread was about all used up, and we certainly could not hold out but a few days longer if we pushed out to sea. But on the island, with our crabs and muscles and eggs, we should not need much water, and could probably catch what we needed when it rained.

“So that very afternoon we set about building a hut, for shelter. Luckily, we had a couple of axes, and we cut down a lot of bushes and trees, and before night we had quite a comfortable place to sleep in. It was a great treat to stretch ourselves out on the leaves and go to sleep. But first we kindled a fire, and cooked some beef and rice, and then if we didn't eat, no matter.”

“How did you get your fire, — by rubbing two sticks

together, as they say the savages do?" inquired Mrs. Preston.

"No; we very fortunately had some friction matches," replied Jerry. "One of our men was a great smoker, and about the last thing he did before we abandoned the brig, was to get all of his tobacco, and his pipe, and a bunch of friction matches, and stow them away in his pocket. That was all he saved from the wreck, and it was lucky for us that he saved so much, for none of the rest of us thought of matches. Well, as I was going to say, we had a grand night's rest. The next day it rained, and about all we did was to catch a little water. We caught a few crabs and roasted them, and they tasted very well. We tried the muscles, too, but nobody seemed to think much of them.

"The next day we rigged a piece of sail to the end of a long pole, and set it up on the highest point of land, as a signal to vessels passing. We collected a lot of bushes, and leaves, too, so that we could make a bonfire in case we saw a sail, for we thought a smoke might be noticed, when our signal wouldn't be. We treated ourselves to a few roasted eggs that day; but we found it wasn't very easy or safe work getting them. Most of the nests were built among steep rocks, where it was almost impos-

sible to get at them, without ladders and ropes, and the birds were so savage that it wasn't safe to go near them without a club. They didn't seem to be at all afraid of us, and wouldn't stir from their nests when we went right up to them. I suppose they never saw any men on their island before, and didn't know what they were. I thought I would just smooth down the feathers on the neck of one real handsome bird that I found near the bottom of the cliff, but she gave me such a poke with her beak that I almost wonder it didn't break my arm. But she got paid for her impudence ; one of the men brought a club and knocked her on the head, and we got three or four eggs from her nest, larger than ducks' eggs."

"Did you eat the bird, too?" inquired Harriet.

"No," replied Jerry ; "that kind of bird is a little too strong even for a sailor's stomach. But I shan't get through to-night, if I stop to tell you about all these little things. We kept a lookout for sails day after day, but didn't see any. Every pleasant day we pushed our boat into the water, to prevent her drying up, and to have her ready for service at a moment's notice ; and every night we hauled her ashore, for fear of a sudden storm. Things went on in this way for about six weeks,

when, one morning, we saw very distinctly a large vessel sailing south, several miles to the east of us. We lighted our bonfire, and in five minutes all hands were in the boat, pulling for dear life toward the vessel. Nobody said a word, but the men kept looking over their shoulders toward the vessel, as if they were afraid they should lose sight of it. We had our mast up, and a bit of sailcloth flying at the top as a signal. We pulled away with all our might for fifteen or twenty minutes, I should think, till at last we got so near that we could see the vessel was a large ship. She had all sails set, but was going rather moderately, for the wind was light. We were still some distance in front of her, and were steering so as to head her off. We began to feel pretty lively now, and were putting in harder than ever, when all at once a fellow, who went by the name of Dick, pulled off his hat, and swung it over his head with one hand, while he kept his oar going with the other, and sung out, —

“ ‘Hurrah, boys! we’re safe! They see us, and have run up their flag as a signal to us!’ ”

“ None of the rest of us could see the flag, but as Dick was allowed to have the sharpest eyes in the crowd, we took his word for it; and, sure enough, it wasn’t but a few minutes before the ship changed her tack, and was

sailing right toward us. If we didn't cheer and laugh and swing our hats then, it's no matter. I suppose we acted like a parcel of fools, but we couldn't help it.

“Well, after we got over our excitement a little, we pulled away toward the ship, and pretty soon we were alongside of her. We found it was the ship *May Queen*, from New York for the Sandwich Islands. The officers and crew treated us first-rate. They gave us clothes, and plenty to eat, and told us we might stay on board till we got a chance to go home. They said they saw the smoke on our island, and that put them on the lookout. With the glass, the captain saw our signal on the hill, and pretty soon he discovered our boat pulling toward them. They didn't know whether the rest of our crew had been picked up or not. They didn't remember hearing anything about it.

“So we had got to go round Cape Horn twice more. That wasn't very pleasant, but it was better than staying any longer on our little island. The captain promised to put us on board the first craft we spoke, bound home; but there was no knowing when we should meet anything. We had a rather pleasanter passage to the Cape in the ship than we did in the *Susan*. It wasn't so stormy, and the weather was warmer, for it was the be-

ginning of summer. We saw lots of floating ice, though,



and we passed very near one immense iceberg that was bound north. The first vessel bound home that we saw was off Cape Horn, but the weather was so rough that we didn't get a chance to

speak her. That was quite a disappointment to us ; but we had to get used to disappointments ; for about a week after this, we saw another craft, and spoke her ; but she was an English ship, bound to Liverpool, and as her captain didn't seem at all anxious to take us with him, our captain concluded to keep us a spell longer.

"It was nearly a month before we spoke another vessel, and we were then pretty well up in the Pacific ; in fact, almost up to the latitude of Valparaiso, though we were far to the westward of the coast. This time we spoke the barque *Bride*, bound from Honolulu to New York. The captain of the *Bride* said he'd take us, so the other captain had a boat launched, and sent us to the barque. We soon found that our berth on board the *Bride* wasn't quite so pleasant as it was in the *May Queen*. The offi-



cers didn't like to refuse to take us, I suppose, but I guess they thought we were more plague than profit. We did our share of the work, though, to pay for our grub, and were on good terms with the crew. And, after all, we had a pretty good time on the voyage home. We made a fine run round the Horn, and up the coast of South America, until we got to the equatorial doldrums. Do you know where that is, Emily?"

"No; I don't think that's on our map," replied Emily.

"Well, it's a narrow belt that stretches right across the Atlantic, from America to Africa, where it rains nearly all the time, and is almost always calm. It shifts about a little with the seasons, but is generally north of the equator, say from four to ten or twelve degrees. It varies in width, too. When we got caught in it, on our way home, it must have been seven or eight degrees wide. We were twelve days crossing it. It was cloudy every day, and such heavy, black clouds, too,—why, our thunder-storms in summer are nothing to be compared to them. We had a little deluge every day, with thunder and lightning, and sometimes a sudden squall, that would last an hour, and then all would be calm again. The air was so hot and suffocating that most of

the men were about half sick, and some of our provisions were spoilt, too ; but at last we got out of the doldrums, into the trade-winds, and though we had one or two gales after that, they were nothing to those tedious calms. We arrived at New York in good order, and I came right on to Boston the same day, with a free pass that the captain got for me. Several others of the Susan's crew came with me. We called on the owners the next morning, and they were quite astonished to see us. They supposed we were dead, long ago. They asked each of us where we belonged, and gave us money enough to pay our fares."

"And was that all?" inquired Mrs. Preston, with surprise.

"Yes, ma'am," replied Jerry ; "and that was more than they were bound to do. Our wages were paid for the outward voyage, and as the vessel was wrecked on the homeward passage, we couldn't claim anything more."

"That seems hard," continued Mrs. Preston. "They might have paid your wages up to the time the vessel was lost, and not felt it much, either, I dare say. I suppose they were insured."

"That isn't the custom," replied Jerry ; "if the

vessel is wrecked, the sailor loses his wages. I thought I was lucky to get enough to pay my fare home. I called at Uncle Henry's store, in Boston, the same forenoon, and he made me go home to dinner with him, all dirty as I was. I felt cheap enough; but aunt and the children were glad to see me, and treated me first-rate. I started for home by the steamboat, that afternoon, and the cars and stage brought me as far as the Cross-Roads. Nobody from this way was over there, so I concluded I had got to walk over; but soon after the doctor came along and picked me up,—and that is the end of my story."

"And now," said Mrs. Preston, "I hope you have had enough of going to sea, and will settle down on the farm, and be a sober and steady young man."

"That's just what I mean to do," replied Jerry. "You won't catch me going to sea again, you may depend upon that. It's a regular dog's life. If father's willing, I'll stay at home and work on the farm in the summer, and go logging with him in the winter. Or, if I can't do that, I'll learn a trade of some sort or other. Anyhow, I mean to do something to earn an honest living."

Mrs. Preston said she was very glad he had come home

with that resolution; and, after a few words of encouragement and advice, — the hour for retiring having arrived, — the family separated, and Jerry found his way to the well-remembered little bedroom, which he had always called his own, and which he found just as he left it, fifteen months before, with the same patchwork quilt of many colors, the same green-paper curtain at the window, — only a little less green, — the same substantial yellow chair, the same capacious horse-hair trunk in the corner, and the same little square of looking-glass on the wall, inclosed in a brown-paper frame.

## CHAPTER V.

### CLINTON.

JERRY had not been in town twenty-four hours before he found that he was decidedly a "lion," — an object of general interest and attention. In the house, he could not stir without being followed by Emily and Harriet, who talked, thought, and dreamed of nothing but their wonderful brother Jerry. Their fondness was almost annoying to him. He was the hero, too, of all the town gossip. Everybody in that little community knew Jerry Preston, and his history, — how he grew up an idle and wayward boy, how he ran away to sea, and how he was shipwrecked, and, as everybody knew. And now almost everybody had heard of his sudden return. The good doctor distributed the news at several distant points, and from these it rapidly spread over all Brookdale. Jerry had several visitors the morning after his return, who came to satisfy themselves that the report was true. With these he chatted away the whole forenoon, relating his marvellous adventures and hair-breadth

escapes. It was planting-time, and everybody was busy, otherwise his callers would probably have been more numerous.

Old Mr. Jenkins, who was Mrs. Preston's man-of-all-work during the absence of her husband, was among the early callers. He lived in a little red house, a quarter of a mile distant, and usually came over every morning to take care of the cattle, and do any work that Mrs. Preston desired. He was in too great a hurry, this morning, to hear or tell any long stories, and seemed only to be thinking how he could turn Jerry's arrival to some practical account.

"It's too bad," he exclaimed; "here are the folks all round got half through planting, and there isn't a furrow turned in your father's land, yet. I don't see where he is. He never staid off so late before. Suppose he'll be mad, when he gets home and finds nothing's been done, but I can't help it. I've had just as much as I could do to get my own land ready; I can't shove off the work as I used to, twenty years ago. Besides, he didn't say anything to me about ploughing or planting. It's a great pity, though, to have things left so. I tell you what, Jerry, I don't know but I *might* possibly squeeze out half a day for you, although I'm dreadful



busy. You get the team ready, and I'll try to run over, after dinner, and we'll plough that lot on the side-hill, just beyond the brook, and manure it, and to-morrow you can put the potatoes in yourself. What do you say to that?"

"Perhaps father doesn't intend to have potatoes there," suggested Jerry.

"Well, I reckon he'd better have them there than have them nowhere," replied Mr. Jenkins, not quite pleased with Jerry's reluctance to accept his kind proposition.

"But never mind," he continued; "it's nothing to me; I don't care anything about it; I was only looking out for your father, that's all;" and he hurried off to his work, without waiting for any further objections from Jerry.

The truth of the matter was, Jerry, with all his good resolutions, was not yet quite ready to go to work. It seemed to him a little too sudden a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous, to put his hands to the plough-tail and the manure-fork on the very day after he had astonished everybody by his return as of one from the dead. It was a little too soon to come down from his eminence as the "lion" of the day. He had rather be receiving congratulations and spinning sea-yarns, just then, than planting potatoes.

Among all the boys of Jerry's acquaintance, there was no one he was so desirous of seeing as Clinton Davenport. Clinton was only a few months younger than Jerry, and had been his playmate almost from infancy. They were not much alike in disposition or character; but living near together, and there being no other boys of their age in the neighborhood, they became not only intimate, but strongly attached to each other. After dinner, Jerry went in search of Clinton. I have represented them as neighbors, but they lived half a mile apart. This distance, however, was thought nothing of in Brookdale, — there were few neighbors nearer than that. Jerry knew very well he should find Clinton at work somewhere on the farm, and he did. He was dropping corn, and his father was at work in the same field, covering the seed. They both gave Jerry a hearty greeting, and the two boys seemed about equally surprised at the growth and change which each marked in the other.

Clinton dropped his corn and chatted with Jerry until the last hill had received its seed; and then, with his father's permission, he took a respite, and the two slowly walked off toward the house.

"I suppose you stick to work as closely as ever," said Jerry.

“Well, yes, I don’t know but I do,” said Clinton; “but that isn’t saying a great deal. Take the year through, I suppose I don’t work much more than half the time. I fuss round in the shop a good deal, rainy days, and in the winter, but I don’t count that anything. I don’t believe I’ve done half the work you have the past year.”

“But you’ve got something to show for your work, while I haven’t got a cent,” added Jerry.

“That’s true,” replied Clinton; “I made out pretty well with my work last season, — put fifty dollars into the savings-bank in a single year.”

“You did!” exclaimed Jerry; “why, you must have quite a pile in the bank by this time; you had about a hundred dollars there, I believe, before I went off.”

“No; I haven’t got much in the bank; it’s less than two hundred dollars now,” replied Clinton.

“You’ll be a rich man, yet,” said Jerry, as if impressed with the magnitude of this nest-egg.

“I don’t know about that,” replied Clinton; “when I get a little more, I intend to spend the whole.”

“You do?” inquired Jerry; “what are you going to buy?”

“An education,” replied Clinton.

“Oh, going to college?” suggested Jerry.

“There, do you see that field, the next beyond the stone-wall?” inquired Clinton, suddenly turning the subject. “That’s my corn-field. I planted it last year, and raised over forty bushels of as handsome corn as you ever saw. Father gives me the use of the land, and helps me about the ploughing; and I do all the rest of the work, and find the manure, seed, etc., and have all I can make out of it.”

“Do you keep hens, still?” inquired Jerry.

“Yes; the hens and turkeys are mine, and I have all I can make out of them,” replied Clinton. “It’s almost six years since I began to take charge of the poultry. I make them pay me about twenty dollars a year.”

“I don’t see how you do it; father always said hens were more plague than profit,” remarked Jerry.

“It’s all in management,” replied Clinton. “They need considerable care and attention, and they won’t pay you any profit if you neglect them. But here we are, at the door; come in, and show yourself to mother.”

Jerry followed Clinton into the house, and was very cordially received by Mrs. Davenport. Clinton’s little sister, Annie, was also in the room; but, though she

had once known Jerry, he seemed to have faded from her recollection, and she was rather shy of the big, brown-skinned boy.

“This is something new, isn't it?” inquired Jerry, pointing to a neat trellis, in diamond-work, surrounding the back door-way.

“Yes; I made that last fall,” replied Clinton.

Jerry had seen too many evidences of Clinton's skilful use of carpenters' tools to be at all surprised at this statement. Mr. Davenport, who had formerly worked as a carpenter, had a great variety of tools, and there was a regular workshop in the rear of the house, where Clinton spent many pleasant hours. He and Jerry now directed their steps to the shop, where several other new specimens of Clinton's mechanical skill, completed or in progress of manufacture, were examined.

“Did you go to school last winter?” inquired Jerry, after he had satisfied his curiosity.

“No; I had been through all the branches they studied, and father thought it would be of no use for me to go,” replied Clinton.

“I suppose you don't have lessons to get at home, now, do you?” added Jerry.

“Oh, yes,” replied Clinton; “I study at home, just

the same as ever. I've been through my arithmetic, grammar, and geography, pretty thoroughly; and now I am studying algebra, chemistry, natural philosophy, and composition."

There was no school kept in Brookdale except during three months in winter. The population was so small and scattered that the people thought this was all they could do for the education of the children. Mr. Davenport, however, did not think this was enough. From the time Clinton was old enough to study, he had required him to commit a certain number of lessons daily, at home, when school did not keep, and to recite them in the evening. Clinton was a pretty good scholar, and in this way made considerable progress with his studies. He had actually outgrown the village school, when but little more than fourteen years old. There was not another young man in town, under twenty, who could boast of having done this. Jerry well remembered how he used to pity Clinton, because he had to study so much, while other boys were roaming about at their pleasure; and, at the mention of philosophy, algebra, and chemistry, something of the same old feeling came up in his mind. But the greatest wonder was, Clinton never seemed to know how badly he was used. He could not seem to under-



stand that there was any hardship about it. He said he didn't study any more than boys did who went to school the year round. Why, if you will believe it, he rather seemed to like his tasks ! It was an enigma that Jerry never could comprehend.

"You said something, a little while ago, about my going to college," continued Clinton, after a pause. "No ; I don't think of going through college, exactly ; but one of these days, when I am old enough, and have got money enough to pay my way, I mean to spend a year or two in the Scientific School at Cambridge. That's what I'm studying and saving up my money for."

"I don't see what you want to study so much for," replied Jerry. "I've been thinking what I'd do with your money, if I had it. I'd buy a smart horse and a handsome wagon, and go round and peddle all sorts of things. I bet I'd make a good deal more money than you can here on the farm, and I wouldn't have to work, either."

Clinton could hardly help smiling at this remark, which so truly revealed the character of Jerry ; but he merely added, —

"Well, that's something I never thought of."

"But I don't believe that would suit *you*," added

Jerry. "I suppose you mean to be something more than common, don't you?"

"Why, as to that," replied Clinton, "I want to do the best for myself that I can, that's all. I never expected to be a great character, or to cut a wonderful figure in the world, or anything of that sort; but I want to be a useful and intelligent man. To tell the truth, I can't make up my mind what I do want to be, exactly. I used to think I'd like to be a merchant, if I could live in some great city, and do business on a big scale, and own ships and warehouses, and make plenty of money; but I've about given up that idea. I think now, sometimes, that I should like to be an architect, an engineer, or something of that sort."

"What, an engineer on a railroad?" inquired Jerry, who supposed an engineer must be a man who runs a steam-engine.

"No; a civil engineer; a man that plans public works, such as roads and bridges and aqueducts and draining, etc.," replied Clinton. "And then, again," he added, "sometimes I think I'll stick to farming; only I shouldn't like to settle down in this little town. If I go into that business, I want one of those great farms out West, that we read about. But I don't know; I can't make

up my mind what I do want to be. I mean to get the best education I can, though, and I'm not afraid but I can turn it to good account, when I do settle down in some business."

It must be confessed that Clinton was rather ambitious. Though his preferences had not settled decidedly upon any profession, it was evident that he expected to make his mark in the world. His father sometimes tried to check this boyish ambition, so eager, exuberant, and all-confident; but, after all, he felt pretty sure that time would correct the fault, and that these ambitious dreams would, in a few years, be chastened down into a very proper and laudable spirit of thrift and enterprise.

"I suppose you've heard nothing from your father yet?" inquired Clinton, as Jerry was about leaving.

"No," replied Jerry.

"Well," added Clinton, "father and I were talking the matter over yesterday, and we came to the conclusion that if he didn't get home this week, we'd go over to your place and put in an acre or two of corn and potatoes, just to get things started. Now you've come home, if we and Mr. Jenkins help you a little, perhaps you might get almost half the planting done before your father gets back. That would be a pleasant surprise to him, wouldn't it?"

“ Father’ll be home before next Saturday night ; there’s no doubt about that,” was all the reply that Jerry made to this kind offer.

Clinton stood silent a moment, as if uncertain how to take these words, and then, calling after Jerry, who had now turned to go home, said, —

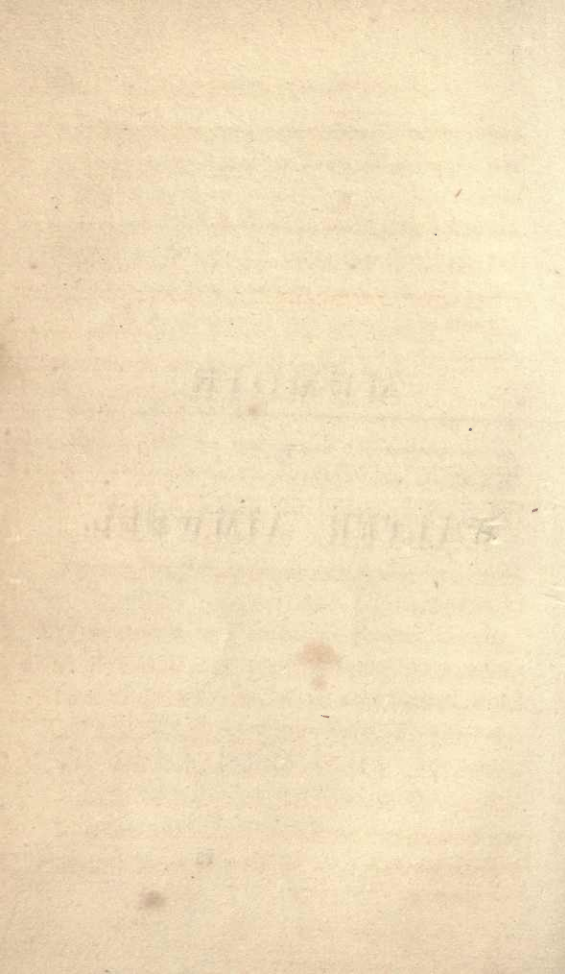
“ If you should want any help, Jerry, let us know.”

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“ Is this all ? ” we think we hear many an eager and deeply-interested, yet disappointed boy exclaim, as he arrives at this point of the volume. “ Oh, it’s too bad to be cut short right in the midst of such an interesting story ! ”

The only reply to be made is, “ A wise Providence has so ordered it ; ” and you can only be thankful that you have so much. The author had proceeded thus far with the volume completing the history of Jerry, when death closed his useful life, and he was transferred from the toils of earth to the rest of heaven. To make up for this deficiency, a Memoir of the Author, with a fine likeness, is added, which cannot fail to interest all the readers of the “ AIMWELL STORIES.”

MEMOIR  
OF  
WALTER AIMWELL.





## PREFACE TO MEMOIR.

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THIS is not a story of romantic scenes or unusual incidents. Externally, the life of WALTER AIMWELL was but a common one,— uncommonly common, if the paradoxical term may be used. And not only are the scenes familiar, but the hero, although a working *power* behind or within them, hardly appears, personally.

Without doubt, the mind is most startled by singular and showy living; and it is well to know of those who, amid extraordinary circumstances, have moved gloriously. As we look on, we surely admire; we may covet the surroundings and the opportunity; we may think of copying the action; we may feel the inspiration of a generous ambition, most likely to be balked.

But an every-day life, lived finely, firmly, truly, purely, appeals to all our every-day hearts, and moves them, not to envy, not to servile imitation, not to ambition ; but to such sincere sympathy as will naturally take effect in noble action where we are, — we not waiting for special position, or the probability of applause.

# WALTER AIMWELL.

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## CHAPTER I.

### HIS BIRTHPLACE.

ONCE there was a little, green peninsula that lay amid the shining waters like a pear upon a plate of burnished silver. The Indians — whose light canoes, like feathers, now and then glided across the gleamy ripples — called the peninsula Mishawum, and the water Mystic.

Since then, lying centuries in the sunshine of God's blessing, the pear has ripened until its surface is ruddy with the homes of civilization, and gray with the dust of commerce ; and the salver has been etched by the shadows of a thousand foreign spars.

The murmuring word Mishawum has been forgotten. English subjects, long since gone to thrones in heaven,

have left in the name "Charlestown" a whisper of their reverence, not for Charles Stuart himself, but for the lawful order and government of which he was the representative.

Charlestown's hills are holy with the houses of God,—rightful descendants of that "Great House" which John Sagamore, the Aberginian chief, gave the Puritan Winthrop "free consent to build." There is a little knoll, sloping toward the sunset, that is sacred with the dust of old-time saints. There is another, looking toward the sunrise, that is glorious with the blood of heroes. On the hill-tops beside the churches, on the slopes beside the buried great and good, all about the town, are the free schools of a people that wisely love their children and the future. Grim, and with some suggestion of remoteness, glower the barred windows of the prison that throws its shadow over those recreant sons that forget lesson and example. On the opposite side of the peninsula, among the massive conveniences of the Navy Yard, telling of uncounted treasure and unmeasured strength, throbs a pulse of the Government of the United States.

On every side are wharves, shipping, bridges, railroads, mighty enginery,—all the stupendous achieve-

ments of man's ten little fingers and his unseen, resolute will, and amid them the thoughtful and genuine observer is thrilled as though he were walking the paths of a mountain land.

Here, on the 30th of October, in the year 1822, William and Tabitha R. Simonds became the parents of a son. This child was named William, but, as he is best known to his youthful readers as Walter Aimwell, in these pages he will be called by this latter name.

Charlestown was the birthplace and childhood's home of Walter Aimwell; and, when it was no longer the place of his actual residence, his feet retrod its streets as often as his limited leisure permitted.

I must think these facts had some degree of influence upon his mind and character. His intellect had such a power of quiet observation, and of ready and just reflection, that the objects about him could not escape his attention, nor could the significance of those objects. Charlestown, like a noble matron of old Greece, hung about his childhood and youth a tapestry of stately figures; and he was always familiar with the pictured legends of freedom and conscience and power and patience and triumph.

Let no young reader misunderstand this. No sur-

roundings can, of themselves, make a youth noble. In regard to everything that grows, from a tiny plant to a grand character, it is true that not all depends upon the soil and climate; quite as much results from the intention or action of the roots in the soil. Plant a thistle in the loam of the garden, it will be a thistle still,—a thistle of thistles, perhaps, yet a thistle. But Walter Aimwell had no wish to be a cumberer of the ground; and the fibres of his attentive mind reached about, and found, and silently drank in, the ennobling suggestions of the great Present and the illustrious Past.



## CHAPTER II.

### SALEM.

WHEN Walter Aimwell was about six years of age, his father, a man of kind disposition and religious principle, was removed by death. Soon after their bereavement, the family left Charlestown, and took up their abode in Salem. Here Walter, who was the third of four sons, remained until he was nearly thirteen years of age.

Even at this early age, his character began to give some intimations of what it afterwards became. In after-years, he speaks of the gratification he felt in attending church even on week-days, and recalls, apparently with pleasure and gratitude, the names of his Sabbath-school teachers.

Only once does he mention the name of Mr. Brooks, the master of the high school, which he had already entered when he left Salem. Yet, short as was the period of his pupilage under this gentleman, the master seemed to have gained a correct insight of the ability and character of his pupil, and the scholar's mind appears to have

received an impulsion in the right direction which was never lost.

I never had any personal acquaintance with the gentleman mentioned; but in the early purposes and methods of Walter Aimwell may be traced effects of the advice of a fine and faithful educator, willingly condescending to dwell upon those minutiae of habits, and to stimulate those secretly-working motives, that do not bring much ready credit to the teacher, but are potent with the future of the scholar; and probably this early and never-exhausted influence should be attributed to Master Brooks.

It is good, once in a while, to think of the eternal mental motion produced by a right thought.

Since I hope to have many youths among my readers, and since Walter Aimwell always felt a peculiar interest in this class, I wish to say that this early assimilation of good thought is the only thing promising special future worth that I can discover in the boy-life of Walter Aimwell, that is in any degree exceptional. This is rare. Very few lads of thirteen have such a store of practical wisdom as he had. Yet that was because he chose to heed good counsel. Probably, nearly all boys, in New England at least, have presented to them enough of the right kind of thought to make saints or heroes or famous

men of them all. Why they do not so implicitly yield to it, they understand as well as any one. They know they have the power of choice.

After a residence in Salem of about six years, Walter Aimwell's mother contracted a second marriage and returned to Charlestown.

Young Walter did not accompany his mother, but went to Lynn to learn the business of a jeweller. He had been there but a short time, when he wrote to her a long and interesting letter. Probably it was the first letter he ever wrote. It is now before me, — its long, large pages neatly and plainly written, with but few inelegances, and no bad errors.

There is a remarkable resemblance between the mind of the boy as manifested in this letter and the mind of the man as shown in the writings of mature years. There are the same orderly groupings of his thoughts and arrangement of his words, the same graphic, straightforward way of expressing himself, the same abundance to say, not from a superfluity of words, but from a mind full of facts that have attracted his attention and have been remembered, and the same occasional introduction of innocent fun, that distinguishes the productions of his manhood. Of course, it should not be understood that

these qualities exist in the same degree ; but he aims for them, and they are all there in kind.

Not only does he show the same taste in writing, but he also displays a similar taste and interest for the circumstances and concomitants of living. He says, "I like very much indeed ; he has got an elegant shop." Again, "He has got a marble table to work on, and he has a great many vases of birds and flowers."

He mentions, as if with pleasant interest, that "next week he is to learn me all the parts of a watch and their names." "I take books out of J. Jewett's Circulating Library at Mr. C—'s" (his employer's) "expense. The price is 12½ cts. for octavos, and 6¼ for smaller volumes, a week." "Mr. C. is trying to get me a seat in Rev. Mr. Cook's meeting-house. I suppose he will hire one if he can. I guess the seats are almost all occupied, for last January 142 persons applied for seats." Evidently Mr. C. differs somewhat from some employers who have the charge of minors.

With his usual respect for why and wherefore, he explains "the reasons" that he did not board at a certain place. The love of music, which remained as long as he lived, was active then. "I have as much music as I want, as he has a number of music-boxes. He has one

in particular which is the best he ever saw. I have got it under my nose now ; it is playing Napoleon's March, which is splendid."

A Mr. Bird married a Mrs. Fish, and Walter Aimwell either originated, or appreciated, the following lines. Without any allusion to the authorship, he inserts them in this letter to his mother : —

"A Bird caught a Fish, and when he had caught her  
He loved her too well to devour or to slaughter;  
And fearing she'd feel like a fish out of water,  
To Watertown safely and kindly he brought her."

He speaks affectionately of all the family, sending polite messages to two of his brothers, and a comical one to please the youngest. And, after writing a much longer and better letter than most boys would have written under the most favorable circumstances, he says, "I can't write any more, as I don't write more than one word before somebody comes in and disturbs me."

I have shown his worst imperfections. It is as likely that they were owing to his interruptions and necessary haste, as to ignorance or indifference. The whole letter is creditable in plan and execution ; and it makes the impression that he was contented and delighted with his place, his business, and his employer.

It almost seems something to be regretted that he did not remain in such happy circumstances ; but it seldom happens that the place that seems most pleasant to us, and the circumstances that are most easy for us, are those which are most beneficial to ourselves, or in which we can be most useful. And, after all, a consciousness of being truly useful is the most satisfactory of all pleasures ; and it confers upon a person a kind of dignity that nothing else does.

At the end of a few months, for several reasons, it was thought to be better to have Walter Aimwell come to Boston and learn the printer's art.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE PRINTER'S APPRENTICE.

ON the eleventh day of April, 1837, Walter Aimwell entered as apprentice the printing office of one of the leading printers of Boston. He boarded in the city, not far from the office. There is no record of his leisure hours, or of his experience at any time during the remainder of this year, excepting a passing allusion which we shall hereafter meet.

On the third of October, 1838, he began to keep a sort of journal or note-book, in which he seems to have recorded striking matters of fact which he met in his reading, and to have inserted occasionally a composition of his own.

At the commencement of the book, which contains one hundred and sixty-six carefully written pages, he does not show as good penmanship as in the letter he wrote to his mother, a year or two before. Very likely he had written nothing worth mentioning since. From remarks that he afterward makes, it is to be presumed

that he was dissatisfied with himself in this respect, and was determined to see if he could not make some improvement, both manual and mental, by practising by himself.

After we have seen the successes of a person distinguished for anything, his first attempts become interesting. Here is transcribed, without any alteration whatever, Walter Aimwell's first essay, dated October 5th, 1838, just twenty-five days before he was sixteen years old.

#### "WEALTH.

"How few in this world are contented! Man is forever grasping at something,--- either wealth or fame or honor. One man spends his whole life in hoarding up riches; his days and his nights are all employed in laborious exertions to procure that which, when he dies, he leaves behind him. He cannot be happy; the more he gets, the more he wants. Perhaps he starts in life penniless. He eagerly looks forward to the time when he can have money enough to live easily; he aims no higher than this. By his exertions he obtains the desired object. But when he gets it, he is no more satisfied than before; he sees men, who, he thinks, were made for the most menial

offices, rolling in their carriages ; his imagination is filled with splendid houses and lands and servants and carriages ; and he makes it the whole object of his life to gain these. He engages in all manner of speculations, and at length, perhaps, becomes rich. But is he happy ? No ; he has cares now that he never had before, and which he would gladly get rid of ; he watches his property with a jealous eye ; it engrosses all his time now to *take care* of what he has got, till at last death steps in for a share. And now of what use is his money to him ? All he can now claim is a little spot of earth large enough to contain his dead body. And if he have children, it is too often the case they revel in the riches which has cost him a life of hard labor, and soon spend it in profligacy ; and they, in turn, are left penniless.

“ This is, generally speaking, all the satisfaction a man that pursues wealth gets. But the true Christian, the philanthropist, has higher and nobler ends to live for than this. He does not confine his attention exclusively to wealth nor honor nor fame ; but he aims in some degree to benefit his fellow-men. His pleasure does not consist in *counting* his money, but in *doing good* with it. He spends his time, or a part of it at least, in visiting the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, or

perhaps carrying the heralds of the cross to the destitute. And when death visits him, he can look back upon his past life with some satisfaction; he knows that he has made good use of the talent which his Maker has given him. He lives like a man and dies comparatively happy. For my part, give me neither poverty nor riches."

Surely, many a boy younger than Walter Aimwell was at this time, can write a more noticeable composition than this. The only thing about it that is particularly promising is its unaffected common-sense, giving a kind of rough strength to the phrasing. Upon the whole, it is not equal to what might have been expected of him in a year and a half after the date of the Lynn letter. Let us see if he did any better at the end of another year and a half.

His last entry in the note-book for the year 1838 was "The Last War; Recollections of a Lecture by A. H. Everett;" an interesting and well-written article of six pages, of the usual letter-paper size. It bears testimony to his strict attention to the lecture and full comprehension of what was said, as well as to a very retentive memory. And here let me intimate to the youth-

ful reader that Walter Aimwell's *complete attention* to whatever he turned his mind at all, was one great secret of his power and constant progress.

In the spring of 1839, he read, in his careful way, the Life of Alexander the Great, and wrote in his note-book an abridgment of what he had perused, dated March 13th. On the 15th of April, he enters some original reflections upon the character of Alexander. I copy, as before, without alteration :—

“After perusing the life of Alexander, one is struck at the uninterrupted success of his arms, in subduing cities and countries, suppressing and punishing revolts, and maintaining a government over those cities which he had conquered. The principal events of his life were foretold and described long before he opened his eyes on this world. . . . This is more strongly confirmed (if stronger confirmation is necessary) by the appearance of Jaddus, the high priest of the Jews, to Alexander, bidding him to march on boldly, and assuring him that the Almighty would follow him. By this, we see that God sometimes makes use of the ambition, power, or vices of one man to punish nations that deserve the divine wrath.

“Undoubtedly, Alexander had in his youth many

qualities and virtues which exalt as well as adorn a prince. But these virtues gave way to those vices which afterwards so strongly marked his character. . . . It is true that he possessed an ardor and a fortitude that surmounted every obstacle ; but his cause was not a good cause ; it was not the cause of a patriot ; he fought not for liberty, but for plunder. . . . But what is most striking in his history, is the manner of his death. We see the conqueror of Asia—the self-styled son of Jupiter Ammon, ‘The Great’—fall by his own vices ! . . . Alexander had accomplished all that was intended for him to do ; and he was left to his own depraved appetites and passions. . . . Strange to relate, after the death of Alexander, *every one of his family connections perished by violence*. Thus, in some measure, were his iniquities visited upon his family. His kingdom, also, as was foretold by Daniel, was divided into several factions.”

The whole article is interesting as the exercise of a lonely boy’s mind ; but limited space compels me to make selections.

In May, he writes a very readable article upon France. It occupies several pages. I extract only one passage :

“I recently heard a gentleman remark, who had resided



several years in Paris, that while there he saw a painting representing Jesus Christ seated upon a throne writing on a scroll the words 'Liberty,' 'Equal Rights,' etc. They say, themselves, they cannot preserve their liberty without religion. 'And,' say they, 'we want a *new* religion; we have got tired of Christianity. First, the world had the Patriarchal religion, then the Jewish religion, and next the Christian religion. Now it is time for another. We want one as superior to the Christian religion as the Christian is to the Jewish.' But pure Christianity is to them a new religion."

Behold how the common-sense of an honest boy pushes out the corner-stone of a pretty pile of sophistries in many a mind assuming to be in advance of its age, in longitudes west from Paris.

It seems that he thought some apprentice-boy, servant, or somebody else in his boarding-house, meddled with his private papers. Being extremely modest by nature and discipline, this was really a great annoyance to him. Probably he had no means of securing his writings, finished or in progress, from the observation of one determined to see them; yet he was too much in earnest in his own plans of improvement to be willing to relinquish them. Accordingly, on the eighth of June of this same

year, he inserts a specimen of secret handwriting, which prying eyes might look at for weeks and not read a word without some assistance; and when, at last, they should succeed, they would find the sentences not sufficiently flattering to make them forget their trouble in deciphering them. Of this secret manner of writing only a few specimens remain. Probably it was mostly used for private hints to himself; and when their purpose had been accomplished, these secret hints were destroyed.

During the time he kept this first note-book, his reading and subjects of thought appear to have been of a very miscellaneous character, as will be seen by a few titles, taken as they stand in the index he carefully made: "Colossus of Rhodes;" "Conscripts;" "Consumption;" "Dogs;" "English Language;" "Milky Way;" "Mohammed Ali;" "Mr. Shiplaster;" "Skin;" "Smoky Chimneys;" "Spartan Heroism;" "Stoves," etc. etc.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MORE NOTE-BOOKS.

IN the spring of 1840, Walter Aimwell commences a new note-book. Here is the

#### "PREFACE.

"In the fall of 1838, I commenced keeping a note-book, somewhat similar to this. As I was then a member of the 'Mechanic Apprentices' Library Association,' and consequently read considerable, I thought it would be useful to keep a book in which to write down all that was valuable and interesting in the works which I perused. And I also thought it would afford a good opportunity to write compositions of my own, which I had never before attempted. And lastly, though not least, it would improve my handwriting, which was then quite bad.

"With these ends in view I commenced a 'note-book.' As to the first object, I found it very profitable and interesting. In the second I succeeded very well,—

better than I expected ; for I found such a taste for writing that now I find it almost impossible to restrain my pen. As to the third object, the book will show for itself. Although there is now much room for improvement, yet I made more in that book than I ever did at any school. This book will differ from the other in that it will be composed mostly of original compositions, including the lectures.

“BOSTON, April 15, 1840.”

Let young minds notice particularly the first paragraph in the new note-book. It introduces his report of a course of lectures.

“The following course of lectures was the only one which I attended during the winter of 1839–40. For I thought it would be better to attend *one* course, and *take notes* of what I heard, than to go every evening in the week, and get my head filled with a miscellaneous assortment of facts which, for want of arrangement, would soon be forgotten. The lectures were highly interesting ; and, meagre and hasty as the sketches of them are, I feel that I have not lost the object for which I labored, and I doubt not these faint outlines will afford me much pleasure in their perusal.”

About three months after he commenced the notebook of which the above is the first paragraph, he began writing another little volume, which he entitled “Sunday Reading.” It is the most personal and the most interesting of all that he has written. From his boyhood until his death, his writings were always truthful, often frank ; but in these pages he photographs his own consciousness, his own soul, for future reference and comparison.

In these two books it is pleasing and useful to see how the boy sets about improving his mind and sanctifying his heart, just as a sensible and practical person undertakes the accomplishment of any purpose. He does, indeed, seem to have been in moral communication with God from his earliest years ; for he not only shows a practical spirit, but he proceeds with a ready faith in the laws of cause and consequence in the moral world, analogous to a child’s instinctive trust in physical laws.

But now listen to Walter Aimwell himself, as he speaks in the first article of his book of “Sunday Reading : ” —

“ It is not only profitable and pleasant occasionally to look back upon all the way in which the Lord our God hath led us, but perhaps it ought rather to be considered

as a *duty*. For if ever the heart is melted to gratitude, it ought to be when it is looking back upon its past life, and contemplating the various scenes through which it has passed. And if this is true of the common events of life, how much more is it of our religious experience, which reminds us of the manner in which God first called our attention to the subject of our soul's salvation, and of our success in the Christian warfare. As I regard my religious experience as embracing by far the most important events of my life, I have thought it would not be altogether useless to preserve in writing a short account of it. If ever this heart should grow cold and stupid (which God forbid), may he grant that the perusal of these pages—containing an account of his providential dealings with me in times past—may awaken me from my ungrateful stupidity, and lead me to examine myself and see if my foundation is sure. However, I would remember that I am not to live on past experience or present hope, but to 'press forward.'

"From my earliest childhood, I believe I have felt the influence of the Spirit of God. Well do I remember, when quite young, retiring with a younger brother to pray. And I recollect most vividly the 'meetings' I used to hold when left alone with him on Sabbath



evenings. We would sing and pray, and then I would read an extract from some religious book, which we denominated the 'sermon.' And I remember the pleasure I took, still later, in going to meeting, even on week days. During this time I was a member of the Tabernacle Sabbath school in Salem, and was in the class of Mr. E. G., and subsequently of Mr. N. P. It is not to flatter my pride that I make these statements, or because I think I was an uncommonly good child; for I well remember many things of my childhood which I should blush to relate; besides, these things only serve to increase the guilt of my subsequent life.

"But, though I was thus blest with right sentiments in my earliest days, yet my heart gradually grew harder, until I began to lose all personal interest in the subject. I cannot recollect any special strivings of the Spirit until I began to reside in Boston, at which time I was about thirteen years of age. But few words are required to relate what took place from this time up to my seventeenth year. I attended no regular place of worship, and frequently spent my Sabbaths in strolling the city, or in reading and writing. I did not read a Bible once in two or three months, and, to tell the truth, I did not even own one. But, though I thus neglected the sanc-

tuary privileges, I was frequently rebuked by my conscience, and I believe the Holy Spirit often strove with me, and I was determined to be a Christian when I had 'a more convenient season.'

"In the year 1839, when between sixteen and seventeen years of age, I was frequently alarmed, and thought much on the subject of religion. Especially do I remember one occasion when I attended for the first time an inquiry-meeting. But there were so many present I had no opportunity for personal conversation, and my interest soon subsided.

"Again was my interest called up, and it seemed as if every sermon I heard had a serious effect upon me. I procured a Bible, and commenced praying. I think it was about this time that I made the following resolution, which I committed to paper in a secret handwriting, and laid in my trunk, that my eyes might frequently remind me of my promise:—

"'Alone in the presence of my God, I solemnly declare it to be my intention, the rest of my life, to endeavor to do my duty to him, and to strive to enter in at the strait gate; and in order to do this I will no more neglect prayer, the reading of the Bible, and other exercises of a similar nature.

“ ‘May the God of all grace help me to keep the above vow !’

“But, alas! this resolution was soon forgotten. Again and again was I awakened, but only to sink again into stupidity. In July, my attention was again called up, and it resulted, as I hope, in my conversion to God.

“The circumstance which awakened my attention at this time I never could tell, unless it was hearing of the conversion of one with whom I was well acquainted. I determined not to let this opportunity pass without becoming a Christian ; and I hired a seat in the Bowdoin-Street church and commenced prayer.

“Although I felt myself to be a great sinner and deserving of eternal punishment, still I did not feel the deep anguish on account of sin which many experience, and which I supposed necessary to conversion. And for no other reason but to raise these feelings, I purchased and read ‘Baxter’s Call to the Unconverted.’ Still I did not spend my nights in weeping nor my days in anguish, as I supposed I must in order to be a Christian. I prayed that God would break my hard heart and show me my sins in their true light.

“In thinking of the state of mind in which I then was, I have since thought I could not better express it than by saying *I almost wept to think I could not weep.*

“At length the thought occurred to me that I ought to dedicate myself to God, and let him do with me just as he pleased. I immediately retired to my chamber, and there gave myself to God.

“During all this time I had no conversation with any one on the subject of religion. I anxiously waited for an inquiry-meeting to be appointed, that I might become acquainted with the pastor of the church.

“Until this time my mind had been dark and cloudy, and I had no hope that I was a Christian ; for I thought I had not yet repented of my sins. But one Sabbath morning in November, I happened to take up the ‘Young Christian,’ and in reading the chapter on ‘Confession’ I came to that part which speaks of the feelings I had been desiring. I immediately saw that they were unnecessary ; and a ray of hope darted into my soul, and I retired to my chamber and again dedicated myself to God, and, as I hope, gave him my heart. This little, trembling hope began to increase, and with it my determination to serve the Lord.

“We often hear of those who, when they have obtained a hope in Christ, cannot contain their joy within themselves, and can find no rest until they have told their friends of the Saviour they have found. This was

not the case with me. I felt greatly encouraged, but my hope was very faint, and I still feared that I might go back to the world.

“ Shortly after I began to indulge a hope, an inquiry-meeting was appointed, which I attended. Mr. H—— conversed with me, and invited me to join the Sabbath school, which, after a moment’s hesitation, I promised to do. I was introduced to the Rev. Mr. Winslow, who appeared to take much interest in me. The following Sabbath I entered the Sabbath school and joined the class under Mr. P—— G——. After this, I attended several inquiry-meetings, and conversed with my pastor and my teacher.

“ On the first of March I drew up a resolution, which, mostly from curiosity, I transcribe : —

“ ‘ *Whereas*, I am sensible of many faults in my everyday character which ought to be removed ; and, as I have reason to fear that were some of my intimate companions to hear that I contemplate becoming a member of the church, they would be *surprised* and *astonished* ; and whereas the sins to which I am most prone are *peevishness* and sometimes *anger*, together with an unwillingness to surrender some of my rights that are not worth standing for, but which tends to produce anything but pleasant feelings in myself and others, therefore

“ ‘*Resolved*, That it is my duty to break off from these sins, and to set a good example to my friends, that they may know that I have learned of Jesus: And, further, resolved that this, the second day of March, I will strive, through the whole of the day, to behave with kindness and good feeling to all, avoiding the above-named sins, and showing to all an obliging disposition.

“ ‘Sensible of my own weakness, I make this resolution in the strength of the Lord, and earnestly pray that he will not permit me to break it.’

“ ‘Through the blessing of God, I was enabled to keep this resolution, not only through the day specified, but through the whole week. Accordingly I adopted it for life.’

And here the writer wishes to say that although Walter Aimwell wrote this when he was seventeen years of age, a very similar degree of success in controlling any natural fault he might have, crowned every succeeding year of his life. The writer, not being able to discover any practical faults of character, applied to several of his most intimate friends, to know what was his special sin, or what wrong disposition he indulged. No one could tell me of any fault that he *indulged*. I do not say that his natural disposition or actual character was perfect. It



would be hard for us to believe that any one was complete in all the moral perfections of sinless manhood. It seems to me that to maintain such a character in this world, as it is, one need have great mental powers and much knowledge, as well as much conscience. What I mean to say of Walter Aimwell is, that he sharply watched his nature and his habits for every little perversity, and thought none too small to be daily guarded against and overcome. He early commenced training himself according to his understanding of the Bible standard of manhood, and he acquired a surpassing degree of self-control, such as none but a thorough Christian, and one who begins the Christian life in early years, can ever hope to equal.

But we resume the perusal of this lad's manuscript:—

“This week I also commenced the plan of having a stated object for which to pray during every day in the week, which I have continued to this day, and think it a very good plan. Here is a specimen:—

“July 13th, Monday, for Friends; 14th, Tuesday, Revival; 15th, Wednesday, Missions; 16th, Thursday, Growth in Grace; 17th, Friday, Church; 18th, Saturday, Sabbath School.

“On Thursday, the nineteenth of March, in the year

1840, a meeting of the examining committee of the church was held, at which I was present.

“On Sabbath morning, July 5th, 1840, at the age of seventeen years and eight months, through the abounding but unmerited goodness of the Lord, I was permitted to unite with the Bowdoin-Street Church. It was the day to which I had been looking forward from my earliest years ; for I always intended to become a Christian and unite with the church.

“Rev. Mr. Winslow preached an excellent discourse from the text, ‘Being confident of this one thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.’ Phil. i. 6.

“After the sermon, about fifteen were admitted into the church. It was the happiest day of my life, and I almost wished to be baptized and received into the church again on the next Sabbath.”

Oh happy youth ! Oh genuine gladness ! Earth yet has spots where the violets of Paradise bloom ; time yet has moments that lie serene in the eternal sunshine of heaven.

## CHAPTER V.

### RESOLUTIONS.

I DO not know as the next following extracts will strike the reader as anything very brilliant or very novel ; but I cannot forbear transcribing them, because they were plucked so near the secret pavilion of his soul, so near the hidden sources of his spiritual strength. To my mind, they are like mosses damp with the moisture of fountains.

These resolutions were adopted in the month preceding his admission to the church.

“ *To grow in grace* is the duty of every Christian. Yet it is a most difficult work ; at least, I have found it so. There are so many sins to subdue, so many temptations to assail, so many crosses of self-denial to take up, that I find the Christian must ever be on the alert, lest he fall into sin, or at least make no progress in piety.

“ In order to meet these failings, it is a good plan for the young Christian to throw as many obstacles as possible in the way of his returning to the world ; and I have

felt it to be my duty to take some decisive step in relation to these matters. Accordingly, I have determined to adopt a set of resolutions, and also to write down a set of questions to be answered *every night*, a review of which is to be made every week.

“I have long hesitated as to the expediency, in my case, of the resolutions; for I feared I should not be able to keep them. But at length I have concluded to adopt a set, taken mostly from President Edwards and Dr. Porter; and although it may require much self-inspection to keep them, yet I hope that, through the blessing of God, they will not be wholly in vain. I wish to make them in the strength of the Lord; for my own strength is weakness; and it is my earnest prayer to God that he will enable me to keep them.

“It may be well to notice several encouragements which I find to persevere in these resolutions. As remarked before, I feared I should not be able to keep them even if I adopted them. But what encouragement do I find in the fact that I am not to make them in my own strength, but in God’s. Though weak in myself, yet he can give me grace to persevere in keeping them; and if I look to him in sincerity for help, he *will* enable me to keep them.

“Also, I have encouragement in the example of others. Though they may not have adopted these resolutions in form, and may not have committed them to paper, they were engraven on their hearts, and they regulated their lives by them. If I fail in living a godly life, it will be my own fault. I possess the same natural abilities to enable me to live a holy life as had Edwards or Payson ; and I also meet with the same obstacles to surmount.

“Finally, I have sometimes thought that these and other duties of religion would occupy too large a portion of my time, which I should otherwise devote to the cultivation of my mind. But in regard to this, also, I find encouragement. What if I do break in upon these hours, if I can feel the assurance that I am prepared for heaven ! It is of vastly more importance that I should seek first the kingdom of heaven ; then I shall have an eternity to spend in expanding my mind, and in drinking in rivers of knowledge.

“*Resolved*, 1. To study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

“2. To strive every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.

“3. Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

“4. Never to do anything out of revenge.

“5. Never to speak evil of any one, so that it shall tend to his dishonor, more or less, upon no account, except for some real good.

“6. In narrations, never to speak anything but the pure and simple truth.

“7. Never to utter anything that is sportive or matter of laughter on the Lord's day.

“8. That I will so live as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

“9. Never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

“10. To think much on all occasions of my own dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.

“11. That I may not be surprised by death, I will endeavor to carry with me the habitual recollection that it *may* come at any moment.

“12. As my comfort in death must depend on my hope of heaven, I will often examine this hope ; because, if I have good reason to believe that I shall live with Christ in glory, I shall have no reason for reluctance in



leaving this world, any more than the sentinel in being called from his post after a stormy night, or the child who has been long from home in returning to his father's house.

“13. To live at all times as I think best while in my most devout frames of mind.

“14. Never to count that a prayer which is so made that I cannot hope God to answer it, nor that a confession which I cannot hope God will accept.

“15. Never to give over or in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

“16. When I am most conscious of provocation to ill-nature and anger, that I will strive most to feel good-natured.

“17. To dress plainly, and wear no ornament that shall tend to foster pride.

“18. To contribute all that I am able to the benevolent objects of the day.

“19. That I will read over the foregoing resolutions at least once a week, and ask myself each day a set of questions to be answered in writing.”

It is quite evident that these secret resolutions were rewarded openly by a virtuous and honorable life.

How full of plain utility is the first resolution! "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." I do not recollect that anywhere the matter of merely intellectual clearness is made the subject of direct instruction in the Bible. But, without doubt, they who purify their hearts and manners, by taking heed according to the Word of God, take the most expeditious method of thoroughly clarifying the merely intellectual vision. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" not alone in the happy heaven that we love to think lies just beyond the years of earth, but probably they shall also see him in the theological and natural and social sciences of our human life.

In the second resolution is found the secret of many a pleasant face and many a strong and happy heart. And here I wish to make a few observations especially to the young. I wish to speak about Walter Aimwell's life's being very *real* to him. Boys think that is a matter of course; but it is not. Their lives seem real to them,—that is a matter of course with healthy boys. But if they live to the age when they should put away childish things, and they do not put them away, and do not live in the very best manner of Christian manli-

ness known to them, or to be easily found out by them, then their lives will not seem real. The most fortunate of them will have a vague sense of having been disappointed. Perhaps they will not feel as though life had strongly or directly opposed their will; but they will grasp at things, indeed their fingers may actually close about things they think dear to them, and it will not *seem* as though they had. Persons whose natural capacities are as good as the average, and who live in civilized communities, grow so that trivialities cannot fill their minds with any sense of satisfaction. Leaving out of consideration the sin, it is the *smallness* of folly that makes the frivolous heart feel empty. It is as though a giant should sit down on the floor, and, grasping a sugar-plum in his great hand, try to coax up the look and feeling of riches and delight manifest in the baby opposite who has a similar sugar-plum. No wonder the giant does not feel happy: he does not even feel the sugar-plum.

They who do not live up to the spirit of Walter Aimwell's second resolution, though they may not always be bitterly miserable, cannot be richly happy, nor even fully alive.

The third, fourth, and fifth rules are commended by almost every child; supposed to be adopted by almost

every adult, and just about as universally violated ; although the obligation is none the less binding, nor the penalty any the less sure, on account of the multitude of the wrong-doers. Walter Aimwell, like everybody else who has given an example of "holy living and holy dying," had great respect for the little things of every day. Early in life he took one of his "decisive steps" in regard to these matters ; and he was one who would not go backward. A very unusual success crowned his efforts to keep these resolutions.

His rule in regard to speaking the truth, pure and simple, is approved by all, and seems very easy to follow. But truthfulness is a virtue not to be possessed but by those who have many others. It requires a sterling character to speak the truth. Genuine humility is one of the first requisites of truth-speaking, and that, of course, is inconsistent with all vanity, pride, ambition, and petty spite, or sullen revenge. Humility is necessary even for the *seeing* of much truth, to say nothing of *saying* it. Next to the humility needful to see the truth without subjecting it to the refractions of our own wicked moods, a steady, faithful mind and will are almost indispensable to keep us from involuntarily giving hue to recital, according to the partialities or prejudices of our hearers.

Humility, courage, strength, are prerequisites to truth-telling, no more to be dispensed with than conscience.

His seventh rule is one of which perhaps he stood in more need than many persons, especially at the time when it was adopted. He had such a keen sense of the ludicrous, and such aptness sometimes to make it appear to others, and the Sabbath being the day on which the apprentice-boy was least restricted in companionship, it is highly probable that he sometimes offended his own taste as well as conscience by the utterance of words that disturbed the thoughts necessary to the restoring of the soul. Probably it is a good general rule; and the majority of objectors to it will be found among those in no great danger of breaking it, but who, if they do happen to think of anything funny, cannot forego the rare pleasure of saying it, even if it rudely break the meditations of those who are trying to keep the Sabbath holy.

Perhaps the abrupt and pithy wording of the eleventh rule may fall with somewhat of gloom upon some young hearts, whose owners are playing the part of butterflies. But then, none but poor little worms, comparatively poverty-stricken in regard to the gifts of God, ought to be ambitious of being butterflies. He who can feel the quiver of wings that stretch six feet should not flutter

about a pink, nor balk his royal bosom of its full breath by running his head into a lily-cup. Let him soar away to the sunshine above the mountains. He will be better satisfied to battle with a cloud than to nestle under a rose-leaf.

That resolution did not affect Walter Aimwell with gloom. Without doubt, he very faithfully kept it; for he often spoke of death, — not making occasions for the subject, but naturally, as it will often present itself to those who do not fear it. I think the only thing in the universe that he dreaded was sin. He had been born into the new life; and although in the initiatory processes of that new birth the thought of death may have struck his mind with peculiar force, he had become so occupied with living the immortal life that death was regarded simply as one of the many things incident to the beginning of that life. He knew God had given him duties and pleasures to satisfy the measure of his capacities before death, and he had not a doubt that the same God would do the same thing after death. He had no gloomy thoughts or feelings upon the subject.

Take particular notice of the fifteenth and sixteenth resolutions. We often hear it said, “There’s no use in striving against nature.” “Don’t blame him; it is natural for him to do so.”



Now there *is* use in "striving against nature," as that phrase is generally understood; else there is no use in the Christian religion, and we may at once relinquish its doctrines and precepts as so many superfluities, and look upon the matchless history in the Gospels as a splendid blunder. If there is no use in striving against nature when nature is in the wrong, or takes the less noble side of the question, then we can dispense, not only with Christianity, but with all schools and all discipline. Without instruction and without training, anybody can act, if he is bound to act only just as he happens to feel at the time. To be consistent, even the prize-fighter should refuse to submit to his "training;" because, for the sake of greater bodily strength and celerity and greater accuracy of motion, he is required to abstain from many things which it is natural for him to do. Rather let him who ever means to be anybody worth naming, or anybody worth the trouble of living, say, with Walter Aimwell, "I will never slacken my fight with my faults, however unsuccessful I may be!"

## CHAPTER VI.

### METRICAL COMPOSITIONS.

PROBABLY Walter Aimwell never attempted much poetical composition after his apprenticeship. At least, but very few specimens have been preserved, except such as are recorded in the note-book commenced in the year 1840.

Nothing so certainly requires great inborn genius as to obtain a name or to succeed as a poet; except working in a tropical swamp in the sunshine, no labor so much depends on the constitution with which a person comes into the world, as that of uttering real poetry.

It is evident that Walter Aimwell had not a commanding genius of this kind, although he had as much talent as many who write books of verse very pleasant for their friends to read, and who obtain a very respectable reputation.

His first attempt is the rendering into rhyme and measure of the Twenty-Third Psalm. The surpassingly beautiful original, and the rhythmic translations of it

by superior poets, leave little chance for distinction to the apprentice-boy. Yet here it is. He entitles it

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

THE Lord my Shepherd is,  
No want I'll ever know ;  
The pastures green and fair he gives,  
Where silent waters flow.

My fainting soul he calms  
When I have lost the way,  
And kindly takes me in his arms  
When from his fold I stray.

I'll pass the shadowy vale,  
For thou shalt go with me ;  
Thy rod and staff, they never fail, —  
My comfort they shall be.

A table thou hast spread  
In presence of my foes ;  
With oil thou hast perfumed my head,  
My cup nigh overflows

Through all my life, O Lord,  
Of mercy will I tell,  
And in thy favored house, my God,  
Forever shall I dwell.

This is a production that has been often excelled ; but,

to at least one listener, its tones are sweetened and deepened by the boyish sincerity of the singer.

The strength of his faith and the fervor of his affections, united to the degree of talent for metrical expression that nature gave him, very likely would have made him a good hymn-writer if he had given his powers exercise and culture with that object in view. Writing for the public, however, either in prose or verse, seems never to have been a purpose in his mind until he had actually done it. When he commenced writing prose compositions, it seemed to be on the general principle that boys ought to improve their faculties, but without any definite notion in regard to the particular manner in which, in manhood, he should employ his, other than his intention of being a printer.

Very likely he thought that exercises in rhythmic composition would be beneficial to his powers, and he may also have enjoyed the exercise, whether beneficial or not. Perhaps it served to relieve the vague yearning and vaguer sense of sorrow, that come to all irresponsible years, especially to those on the border-lands of boyhood and manhood.

OH for the bliss of those  
Who've trod life's dreary way,  
Who've known its joys and felt its woes,  
And gone to realms of day.

Oh for the bliss of those  
Whose conflicts all are o'er ;  
Who've vanquished all their earthly foes,  
To reign forevermore.

Oh for the bliss of those  
Who slumber in the grave ;  
Who've reached the land where Jordan flows,  
And passed its sullen wave.

Oh for the bliss of those  
Who're free from guilt and sin ;  
Whose evil hearts no more oppose,  
Nor fears arise within.

Oh for the bliss of those  
Who reign with God above ;  
Who in their Saviour's arms repose,  
And sing his matchless love.

Oh may this bliss be mine,  
When I their way have trod ;  
Then in my Saviour's light I'll shine,  
And give the praise to God.

Surely the romantic dislike of earth, to which thoughtful youths are somewhat subject, but which decreases as their years increase, was never more modestly hinted. Religion keeps persons of all ages from a great deal of nonsense.

In all his serious compositions, there is some suggestion of the purity and depth of the atmosphere in which he saw the object he tried to paint, which, of itself, gives pleasure to a reader more disposed to enjoy what is, than to talk about what is not.

### MY FRIEND.

MINE be the friend who walks with God,  
And strives to please him here below ;  
Whose life is governed by his Word,  
Whose heart's a spring whence love doth flow.

Mine be the friend who covets not  
The wealth and honor of this earth ;  
Who scorns the joys so dearly bought,  
And turns from noisy scenes of mirth.

Mine be the friend who feeds the poor,  
The sick restores, the naked clothes ;  
Whose word is faithful, kind, and sure,  
Whose heart no guile or falsehood knows.

Be such, and only such, my friend ;  
His joys and sorrows let me share,  
A blest eternity to spend,  
That Christ for all such will prepare.



## THE STRANGER.

WHEN, like a broken reed,  
We bow with sorrowing heart,  
And 'neath the stroke in anguish bleed,  
That tender ties must part, —  
Oh, then 'tis sweet that we  
Can claim a heavenly birth,  
And, like the ones we no more see,  
Are "strangers in the earth."

When sorrows crowd our path,  
And life looks dark and drear,  
When hushed the ringing, joyous laugh,  
And no bright dream doth cheer, —  
Oh, then a kindling beam  
Doth chase away each tear;  
And hope in that sweet thought doth gleam,  
We are but strangers here.

A stranger in the earth !  
Then let us rest no more,  
Till sleeping 'neath the waving turf,  
Our wanderings here are o'er.  
A pilgrim to the skies !  
Then let us know no fear,  
But joy beam brightly in our eyes  
That we are strangers here.

Is not the following a pithy phrasing of the old sweet lesson of charity?

OH, when the wintry storm beats high,  
And howling blasts sweep through the sky ;  
When ice and snow the earth enshroud,  
And ye around your hearthstone crowd ;  
Then think of that poor neighbor near,  
Whose hearth is cold, whose home is drear.

And when the gentle south wind blows,  
Wafting sweet odors from the rose ;  
When birds their gilded plumage wear,  
And music floats upon the air ;  
Oh, then, go see if birds and flowers  
Sweeten lone poverty's dark hours.

When, gathered round your evening meal,  
No want is nigh, no need ye feel ;  
Oh, once forsake the happy spot,  
To share the poor man's bitter lot ;  
Behold his table scanty spread,  
And hear his children cry for bread.

And when your children's happy voice  
Loud bids your own soul to rejoice ;  
When youthful pleasures thrill each heart,  
Or kind instruction you impart ;  
Go, once, the sorrowing orphan cheer,  
And wipe the widow's freezing tear.

THE SHIPWRECK OF LIFE ;  
OR, THE LESSON OF ADVERSITY.

As in some fairy bark that glides  
So gayly o'er the rippling stream  
I floated on life's sunniest tides,  
Beguiled by many a thoughtless dream.

No clouds but those of gilded hue  
Enrobed the smiling azure sky ;  
No frantic blasts around me blew,  
But gentlest zephyrs bade me hie.

Thus many a thoughtless hour I whiled  
Upon a tranquil summer sea ;  
Entranced with joy, at fear I smiled,  
Nor dreamed that aught could injure me.

But soon appeared a darksome cloud,  
Its sable folds unfurling fast,  
Till with a gloomy, frightful shroud  
The deep-blue heavens were overcast.

Then rose a moan upon the air,  
The dismal winds were roused from sleep,  
The lightnings flashed their fiery glare,  
And echoing thunders shook the deep.

Now on some angry billow tost,  
Now buried in an ocean tomb,  
I saw that every hope was lost,  
And sank, despairing, to my doom.

Erelong, upon a lonely rock,  
My fragile, shipwrecked bark was cast,  
Enfeebled by the billows' shock,  
And racked by every howling blast.

But ONE there is who guides the storm, —  
To him I raised a murmuring cry :  
“ Why hast thou left me thus forlorn ?  
Why cast me here, alone to die ? ”

He spoke, — ah ! 'twas a tender word,  
That soothed each passion of my heart,  
And deeper, livelier feeling stirred  
Than thunder's roar or lightning's dart.

“ My child, it was a treacherous sea  
That so entranced thy wondering eyes ;  
And *by thy loss* I rescued thee,  
For he who ventures on it dies ! ”

Here is a beautiful pleading hymn.   He called it

INTERCESSION.

FATHER ! turn thy pitying eye ;

Lo, a wanderer comes to thee ;

Hear, O Father, from on high,

Hear his penitential sigh,

While he bows in agony.

Father ! see the glistening tear, —

Speaks it not contrition deep ?

And that grief which none may hear,

Breaks it not upon thine ear

In the silent hours of sleep ?

Father ! hear the humble prayer ;

'Tis thy erring child who pleads ;

See what sorrows gather there,

And o'ercloud him with despair,

While his soul in secret bleeds.

Father ! turn a pitying eye ;

See, a wanderer seeks thy face ;

Listen to his mournful cry,

Bid his fears and sorrows fly,

And proclaim thy pardoning grace.

Perhaps the last verses he ever wrote are some lines for the Fourth of July, 1843, which he presented to his

friend and room-mate, L. P. H. They were written in better days than the present, although perhaps the "better days" of nations, like those of individuals, are more in seeming than in fact. However, we can all sincerely join in the last stanza :—

'Tis not before a blood-stained throne  
We bend the knee to-day ;  
No monarch's power we trembling own,  
Nor feel a sceptre's sway.

We bring no chaplet's fragrant leaves,  
To grace the conqueror's brow ;  
No heart its flattering homage breathes  
Upon the warrior now.

O Freedom ! of our earthly joys  
Thou art the glorious crown ;  
Then, while a song our lip employs,  
We'll sing to thy renown.

On this thy sacred natal day,  
What raptured hosts draw nigh  
To catch thy spirit-moving lay,  
And roll it through the sky.

Thus, God of Freedom, may it be,  
Till earth's last song ascend !  
Thus may Columbia's sons be free,  
Till time itself shall end !



Many more verses of equal or superior merit might be transcribed ; but these sufficiently indicate his degree of ability, and the general nature of his feelings at this time. Perhaps, though, this chapter ought not to be concluded without one specimen of the playful composition with which he sometimes relaxed the usual tension of his earnest mind.

The following lines were written during the exciting presidential contest of 1840 :—

OH, these exciting, crazy times !  
On you I'll write some bitter lines.  
And ye who politics can talk,  
While still ye eat or sleep or walk,  
Since I alone can't stop your race,  
I'll fling my venom in your face.  
From Monday morn till Sabbath night,  
At evening's shades and morning's light,  
The politician's voice I hear  
Paining mine oft disgusted ear.

"Hurrah for Tip !" cries one with glee ;  
"From Martin's rule deliver me !"  
"Down with the banks !" a Demo cries ;  
And "Crush the wretch !" a third replies.  
"Kent's elected — no mistake !"  
Cries one as soon as he's awake ;

“Crow! Chapman, crow!” some loafers shout;  
“Our cause is just,” replies a lout.  
“Tremendous frauds!” a Loco cries;  
Another swears the rascal lies.  
The sons of Freedom lift their voice,  
And in their great “huge paws” rejoice.  
“The weak, old man” they execrate,  
And British whigs and gold they hate.  
Still, as I spin these verses out,  
I hear the politicians shout,  
And martial music greets mine ear,  
Whilst the loud cannon’s voice I hear.  
Processions long, of all sorts made,  
Full oft our frightened streets parade;  
Stump speeches, too, are cheap and stale,  
And up Salt River many sail.

Ah! whither shall I turn to find  
Serenity and peace of mind?  
Go north or south, or east or west,  
And still I search in vain for rest;  
My path is still beset by those  
Who *will* be friends to me or foes.  
Alas! how long must I endure?  
Is there no help, no hope, no cure?

Some young reader may find pleasure in guessing this

## RIDDLE.

I LIVE in your midst and belong to mankind,  
Though some will contend that I'm found in the moon.  
To year and to place I am never confined,  
Yet I sport in the morning and flee from the noon.  
In Europe or Asia I've never been found,  
Nor can Africa boast me among all her wealth,  
But I with the Pilgrims my toilsome way wound,  
To find in America home for myself.

With martyrs I've braved the fierce torment and gloom,  
With missionaries traversed the desert of sin ;  
The "M.D.'s" to me owe at least half their fame,  
For I help them their honors and patients to win.  
I lead in all mischief, and am ever in blame ;  
Though I live in the mounts far from city and town,  
I'm the first to make merry, — but guess my true name,  
And among the morose you will all set me down.

Without me, e'en music would soon make you sick,  
And your home would lose most of its value and worth ;  
The friends of good morals would all miss me quick,  
And the meek and the humble would cease from the earth  
But though I oft meet with the mighty and mean,  
And the farmer, mechanic, and merchant I own,

Yet oft I am greatest when by myself seen,  
And increase by the hundred when left quite alone.

I assist in all pomp, and in games have no mate,  
Though too often I sink into mourning and gloom ;  
And you mortals I help to make matchless and great,  
Though I'm claimed by the worm and consigned to the tomb.  
And now if you cannot yet tell me what's hid,  
If you look up the chimney the riddle is broke ;  
But be quick, my good readers, and do as I bid,  
Ere I vanish in steam, or get lost in the smoke.

Finally, considered as poetry, it is to be presumed that Walter Aimwell's efforts did not approximate his own conceptions ; and it is also probable that he never saw sufficient reason for his endeavoring to make them do so. It would have struck a mind like his, that the world stood in less need of songs of soft sorrow and pretty sighs of aspiration for a better condition of affairs, than it did of good, earnest living in the world as it is, and of those tangible achievements that he could better compass by other means. His humility was too genuine and his judgment too sound for him to believe himself capacitated for being called to any such duty as singing in that grand style which really move hearts and moulds minds to deeds of greatness and glory. We shall see

that, without leaving the round of his daily occupations, he found opportunities for congenial labor and constantly increasing usefulness. And thus his soul went through the world, a living prayer, — an incarnate psalm.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CONSCIENCE A DIVINER.

THE following, written in the summer of 1840, explains itself and a great deal besides :—

“It ought to be the serious inquiry of every true disciple of Christ, ‘Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?’ or, in other words, ‘How shall I spend the present life?’ And it may be profitable to notice two ways in which I should spend mine.

“1. I must strive to become an eminent Christian. If I do this, I shall spend this life well, and I shall be happy, meet with what afflictions I may. I must not be a half-way Christian, but a thorough one. Neither must I be satisfied with my present attainments in piety, but press forward. I must strive to grow in grace every day; and if at night I look back and see no progress in divine things during the day, or if I can see that I have let Satan have any of the ground I have gained before, I must not be satisfied. I have found that just in proportion as I deny myself, and take up my cross and fight



with my sins, I am happy. Thus has God wisely connected duty and happiness. Let me strive, then, every day to become more holy, to cast down every imagination and everything that exalteth itself in my heart, and thus become a tabernacle for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

“2. I must *do* good as well as *be* good ; and I must labor to have those around me enjoy the same spiritual blessings that I do. It may never be my privilege to give myself to the heathen and labor for their conversion to God, though I sincerely wish it might ; but there are other ways in which I can help to do the work. I can contribute of my substance to help the cause, and, by my influence and example, I may be the means of promoting Christ’s kingdom on earth. Besides, there are those in our own country, yea, in our own houses, whose situation is as bad as that of the heathen, on some accounts ; for, though nominally Christians, they have not the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and unless brought to repentance, they must meet a fate worse than that of the poor untutored savage who has never heard of the name of Jesus.

“There are ways in which I may glorify God on earth ; and these are the best ways in which I can spend this life. If I persevere in thus spending it, and if I

fight the good fight of faith, I shall have a crown of life laid up for me in heaven. What an encouragement is this! Even if this were taken away, it would be my duty thus to live, for it is what I owe to Christ. How much more, then, seeing that every encouragement is offered to me by God and Jesus Christ.

‘So live, that, sinking in thy last long sleep,  
Calm thou mayst smile while all around thee weep.’”

Here is another article, dated January, 1842, which also explains itself:—

“As I have lately engaged in rather an aspiring undertaking for one of my age and standing in society, namely, writing and publishing a book, I have thought it might be well to preserve a brief history of this affair, which is as follows:—

“At the beginning of the year 1841, as I had made considerable progress in writing, and had found much amusement and mental profit in thus employing my leisure time, I began to inquire whether I was not capable of writing a book, —at least a Sabbath-school book for children. I did not know, nor could I know, until I had made the experiment. For some time I could think of no subject on which to make the trial. But one day,

while engaged at work, I had occasion to 'set up' an extract from the Revised Statutes of this State, of which the following was a part : 'It shall be the duty of the President, professors, and tutors of the University at Cambridge, and of the several colleges, and of all preceptors and teachers of academies, and all other instructors of youth, to exert their best endeavors to impress on the minds of children and youth committed to their care and instruction, the principles of piety, justice, and a sacred regard to truth, love to their country, humanity, and universal benevolence, sobriety, industry,' etc.

"It immediately occurred to my mind that here was a subject for a Sabbath-school book ; and a day or two after this, on January 26th, 1841, I commenced writing the 'Pleasant Way,' with the intention of submitting it to the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society for publication. I persevered in this effort, and devoted the larger part of my leisure time, for five months, to its accomplishment. After completing it, I revised it, and entirely rewrote it for the press. This I finished June 25th, 1841 ; and the next day I sent it, by a Charlestown omnibus, to Rev. Mr. Hoadley, who resided in that town. I thought best to withhold from him my name ; and, therefore, in the letter accompanying the manuscript, I re-

quested him to address me by a name which I assumed for the occasion.

“I heard nothing of the fate of my book until the first of August, when I received a letter from Rev. Mr. Hoadley. I opened it with trembling hands and with feelings of indescribable anxiety, and found that the committee had not yet met to decide upon it; but as the letter hinted that there was little doubt of its acceptance, my joy may be imagined.

“Shortly after this, my fondest hopes were realized; for I received a letter from Mr. Hoadley, dated August 18th, 1841, informing me that the manuscript was accepted, and adding that it was ‘very well prepared in the main.’

“I cannot describe the joy which this news gave me, as I cannot the suspense from which it relieved me. I answered these two letters on the last day of August, still keeping back my name, and everything that would lead to its discovery.

“One month after this, I received a letter from Mr. C. C. Dean, treasurer of the Society, informing me that ‘The Pleasant Way’ was in his hands and would soon go to press. I returned an answer to this letter, expressing my desire in regard to a frontispiece, etc.

“ On the 12th of October, ‘The Pleasant Way’ was brought into the printing office of Mr. Damrell (the one in which I work), as copy. I had the pleasure of working on it myself, and set up about sixty pages of it.

“ Having gone thus far without being discovered by any one, I could keep the secret no longer, but revealed it to my brother H—— (who was at the time my roommate and my most intimate companion) after making him promise faithfully to inform no one of it.

During the time ‘The Pleasant Way’ was in the office, there was considerable talk about it; and it was not long before I was told all the particulars about it, — the mysterious author, correspondence under an assumed name, etc. At one time, the foreman of the office gravely informed me that he rather suspected that Dea. Julius A. Palmer was the author. He also remarked to me, and afterward repeated the remark in my hearing, that it was a ‘very excellent book, — one of the best ones the Society has published.’ Of course, these little events afforded indescribable amusement to me.

“ During the first week in November, the printing was completed; and in the second week, ‘The Pleasant Way’ was published. The expense of printing, not including paper, binding, etc., was seventy-six dollars and eighty cents.

“After it was published, I received a letter from Mr. Dean, informing me that, according to their standard price, the copyright of the ‘Pleasant Way’ would come to sixty dollars; but, as I agreed to defray half the expenses of a frontispiece, this sum would be reduced somewhat.

“The manner in which ‘The Pleasant Way’ was received exceeded my utmost expectations and surprised me not a little. The following notices of it I have thought best to preserve, by way of encouragement. There were probably a few others which I have never seen.

“The following appeared in the ‘Sabbath-School Visiter’ for December, 1841; it was written by Mr. Hoadley, and I myself had the pleasure of setting it up:—

“ ‘The object of this book, as stated by the author, is to illustrate, in a familiar and interesting manner, some of those virtues which constitute the character of the Pilgrim in the Pleasant Way. The principal subjects introduced are Justice, Industry, Filial Duties, Governing the Tongue, Temperance, Benevolence, Humanity, and Piety. These are treated in a manly and dignified manner, with frequent illustrations from history and biography, and sometimes from science, and a happy



adaptation throughout to the young. Some stories may be more taking, perhaps, to some; but the Pleasant Way, we think, can but be well received. And for all who desire solid improvement of the more substantial points of intellectual and moral excellence, it must be, beyond doubt, a lasting, good book; and, though designed more especially for the young, it may be read with profit by all of every age.'

"The 'Boston Recorder' thus notices it:—

"'A very pleasant book, and as useful as pleasant. Gladly would we persuade all our young friends to procure it, read it, remember it, and obey it. . . . It is a serious book, but a sprightly one. Its teachings are all solid and pure, but illustrated by *facts* which at once amuse and enlighten the mind, correct the judgment, improve the heart, and guide the feet in the narrow way to heaven.'

The following notice was written by a gentleman, distinguished at the time for his ability, and who has since occupied positions of honor.

"'We have received a volume of one hundred and seventy-three pages, published by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, and have looked it over with the greatest pleasure. Of all the good books for the young,

which this Society has printed, we have not seen a better. It treats of Justice, Industry, Governing the Tongue, Benevolence, Humanity, and Piety, in a very *pleasant way*, and we hope the author will write more books.’”

He has copied several other remarks from various papers equally complimentary, but it is unnecessary to repeat them here. These are given to indicate his success, and also his feelings, as well as to show some reasons why he was confirmed in his suddenly-formed intention to write for the public according as other duties gave opportunity.

On the fourth day of May, through the foreman of the printing office, he received forty-five dollars and six copies of the book, that being the amount due him from the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society.

With one more quotation from his book of “Sunday Reading,” this chapter shall be closed.

“The self-abhorrence and humility of good men often appear strange to the self-righteous ; and when they see the Christian mourning over his sins, and reproaching himself for his coldness of heart, they too often look upon him as a fanatic or an insane man. Why is this ? Why is it that men often pride themselves on their goodness, while the sincere Christian thinks himself the worst

of all men? I think the principal reason is this: the Christian judges himself by the law of God, without any regard to the conduct of others; the worldly man takes a directly opposite course.

“See the Christian. He takes the Word of God and examines his heart. He finds that law requires perfect obedience. But, ah! he sees he has not begun to obey it. And he is ready to cry out with righteous Job, ‘Behold, I am vile. I will lay my hand upon my mouth;’ or, with David, ‘Behold, I was shapen in iniquity;’ or, with Daniel, ‘O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face;’ or with Paul, ‘Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?’ or, with Payson of modern days, ‘I know that I am everything that is bad summed up in one.’

“Now all this is the language of penitence. It shows that those who uttered it knew their own hearts. . . . Had Job or David or Daniel or Paul or Payson compared himself with other men, without reference to the law of God, probably he would have seen that he was better than any around him. But they did not do this. They went directly to the Law, and by that examined their hearts.

“Now look at the self-righteous man. He looks at

those around him, and sees in them many failings. He looks at his own outward conduct, and finds, perhaps, that he is honest, kind, amiable. He immediately concludes that he is going to heaven. His language is, 'Surely God will not cast me off. I am as good, and perhaps better, than the majority of men. And I do not see but I am as good as those men who make great professions of piety. To be sure, I have some faults, and so have they, too. But God will overlook these little failings.' And if he sees a man who appears to abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes, he immediately sets him down as a fanatic.

"But, oh, when the Spirit reaches that heart, what a change! How quickly does his righteousness disappear, or become as filthy rags. When the commandment comes, then he says with Paul, 'Sin revived and I died.'"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### JOURNAL.

AT the beginning of the year 1841, Walter Aimwell commenced keeping regularly a journal, "hoping," he said in the preface, "that it may be profitable to me now, and useful and interesting to me at some future time."

His entries were much condensed, but they seem to give a very accurate account of the comparatively few incidents in his monotonous outward life; and we even get some hint of the sweet, ineffable pleasures that his soul, ingenious in happiness, could shape out of what some might think very poor and very scanty materials. Young persons, practically pure and truly Christian, are all great geniuses in the art of living happily.

So we read of young Walter Aimwell that one evening, "there being a bright moon," he went to Charlestown, and "stopped some time on the bridge, listening to the sweet strains of the band on board the receiving ship at the Navy Yard." Another evening he reads "the Life

of Nathaniel Bowditch nearly through, and gathers from it several important hints." Another, he commences writing the Pleasant Way. Another, he mentions that he has observed the day as a day of fasting and prayer, (it is not a public fast-day), and records it in cipher; his native modesty probably reminding him of the shut closet-door and the ignorance of the left hand.

Again, "I was measured, and found myself five feet seven and a half inches tall, without boots; consequently, 'in the ordinary walks of life,' when I have boots and cap on, I am about six feet high." He was a little more than eighteen years of age at the time.

One night he "had a somewhat remarkable dream, — remarkable not for any strange combination of ideas or flight of imagination, but for its very close resemblance to an allegory." As it may interest some persons, curious in the mysteries of psycho-physical science, his whole account of the dream is here copied: —

"I thought I saw a large and beautiful building at some distance from where I was, and separated from me by marshes and shallow water. Whoever travelled through this water was admitted to the house, where he was secure from every trouble, disease, and death. I soon began my way toward this house, and found that it



was very difficult and dangerous travelling. The little cockles, usually found in such places, crawled up my naked feet and fastened themselves upon me. But I constantly removed them. At times, I was wellnigh discouraged ; for my head was continually bowed down to watch against the dangerous holes with which my path was beset. But I would then cast my eye toward the happy home whither I was going, and sing, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' Here I awoke, and could not fail to see immediately the moral of the allegory. I only regretted that I had not slept on a few moments longer, and found myself at my journey's end."

Once he attended what he calls "a loco-foco, anti-slavery, temperance, methodist, moral-reform, woman's-rights, and every-thing else convention," and seems not to have been very well pleased with the sense, or the manners, of the speakers.

Another evening, "attended a lecture on the history, construction, and power, of church organs, by H. R. Cleaveland, Esq.," with illustrations by Mr. Greateorex. "Of course, the lecture was highly interesting and instructive."

On the fast-day appointed on account of the death of President Harrison, he worked in the office until ten

o'clock, then went home, and at eleven went to church, and heard "an excellent sermon." He staid at home in the afternoon and evening and wrote.

One evening he went up to the Common and heard some "delightful music" from the Brigade Band; and soon after, going again, when "both bands were absent from the city," he heard the Cambridgeport band. "The music was poor, but as good as could be expected from a country band."

Again, he went to the Oratorio of Mount Sinai. "After hearing Part I," he "was satisfied without hearing any more, and came away." The next evening, he listened to the "Messiah," and was better pleased than on the previous evening, but frankly owned he was "not very fond of such music."

One "fine day" he accepted an invitation to "ride with Mr. Damrell in his buggy."

Soon after, in consequence of an accident to the "Morning Star," he went to work at eleven o'clock at night, and worked until one; then, returning home, found it impossible for him to awaken any one so as to get in, and therefore returned to the office, and continued working until five o'clock.

One rainy Sabbath, "As I lent my umbrella a few

days ago, and have not seen it since, I was detained from Sabbath school, and also from church. This is my first absence from Sabbath school since I joined it, (twenty-two months), and I have not been absent from church before, for about two years."

One evening he attended the wedding of a favorite brother, and "the evening passed off most agreeably." The next evening he records that he has "felt very dull and homesick to-day, on account of the loss of my brother, who has been my room-mate nearly all the time for several years." Soon after, he leaves his boarding-place in Green Street, where he has been for several years, and goes to reside in the family of his employer. It is pretty evident that, for some reason or other, Mr. Damrell especially likes this modest youth.

After patiently and carefully making entries in his journal every day of the year, he gives the following compact and characteristic

#### "SUMMARY.

"The labors of this year are now closed, and this my first Journal is completed. Its pages bear witness to the different scenes through which I have passed, and show how I have spent this portion of my brief existence.

But my object in keeping this record would not be fully realized, did I not now add a few statements which could not be embodied in the foregoing pages, and if I did not also gather up a few statistical facts, showing more plainly how I have passed my time.

“From the preceding pages it appears that I have attended one hundred and forty-three religious meetings; attended Sabbath school fifty-one times; attended singing school fifteen times; visited Charlestown seventy-one times; attended three temperance meetings, three lectures, five musical entertainments, one wedding, one comical entertainment, and the celebration of the Fourth of July.

“During the past year, I have written the following pieces of prose for my note-book: ‘The Sleigh-Ride;’ ‘The Rash Act;’ ‘Sketch of a Modern Anti-Slavery Convention;’ ‘Antiquity and Importance of the Mechanic Arts;’ ‘Improvement of the Mind.’

“I have also written the following pieces of poetry: ‘The Weary Wanderer;’ ‘The Slave’s Theme;’ ‘Hymns;’ ‘Patriotic Ode;’ ‘Sonnet;’ ‘The Pious Dead;’ ‘I’m Weary of Sinning;’ ‘A Riddle.’

“These articles occupy twenty-seven pages of my note-book. I have also copied twelve pages of other matter into my note-book.

“ Besides this, I have written ‘The Pleasant Way,’ and four letters relating to it. In addition to this, I have written fifty pages letter-sheet, equal to about seventy printed pages like those of ‘The Pleasant Way,’ toward another book, and this journal of one hundred and thirty-two pages.

“ During the past year I have read the following books : ‘Life of Nathaniel Bowditch ;’ ‘Plutarch’s Lives ;’ ‘History of Women,’ two volumes ; ‘Auly Moore,’ two volumes ; ‘Nelson on the Cause and Cure of Infidelity ;’ ‘Memoir of Harlan Page ;’ ‘Pilgrim’s Progress, Part I.’ ; ‘Malcom’s Travels,’ two volumes ; ‘Architecture of the Heavens ;’ and the Bible nearly twice through. Besides this, I have perused a great deal of miscellaneous reading.”

After this summary, follow three pages of accounts of receipts and expenditures for the year. By these it appears that his total receipts were fifty-one dollars and forty-seven cents, and his total expenditures fifty dollars and forty-seven cents, leaving a favorable balance of exactly one dollar. Of his expenditures, five dollars and eighty-two cents were for church and charity. He was not paid for “The Pleasant Way” until the next May.

Surely the machinery of Walter Aimwell's life was not complicated, and the material of it was not bulky. Few boys have less ; yet he had all that was necessary to make a character strong and noble, and to accomplish results whose influence for good will outlast time itself.

This compact method of journal-keeping he practised until the very day of his death. In these journals, he never expatiates upon any subject ; yet I shall extract a passage here and there, because I would rather the reader should take a suggestion from his own pen than an ampler remark from mine.

“*Jan. 3, 1842.* Went to work this morning at half-past three, to help get out the first number of the ‘Christian Reflector.’

“*Thursday, April 7.* Unpleasant. Annual Fast to-day. At seven o'clock in the morning went down to Salem in the cars, with my room-mate, L. P. H. On arriving there, I immediately went to Uncle R.'s, in Danvers, where I found my mother, who went down yesterday. From there we rode in a carryall to Miss Mugford's.<sup>1</sup> We afterwards visited Mrs. A.'s, and from thence went to the Tabernacle church, and sat in the pew which we formerly occupied. Rev. Mr. Wor-

<sup>1</sup> The heroine of Rev. Dr. Worcester's “Triumph in Trial.”



cester preached a very good sermon from the text, 'Remember this, and show yourselves men.' Isa. xlv. 8. After taking dinner with Mrs. A., I called on L. P. H., and became acquainted with his parents. We then walked around together for some time, and visited our old schoolmaster, Mr. Brooks, who appeared very glad to see us. After tea, mother and myself, with father and little Charlie, who came down in a carryall this morning, all rode home together, and reached Charlestown at about eight o'clock. Though the weather was rather inclement, I never spent a more agreeable visit in Salem, and I shall long remember it with pleasure."

"*May 1, 1841. Sabbath. Warm and pleasant.* After the sermon, fifty-seven persons were admitted to the church by profession, and ten by letter. It was a most interesting scene, and one which I shall long remember with pleasure. The church was very crowded, and the services were unusually solemn. Most of those who united with the church were young, and some were yet in the years of childhood. These are the first fruits of the delightful revival now enjoyed by our church in common with others in the city. . . . The communion season was one of deep interest."

"*May 3. A fine day. At five o'clock in the morn-*

ing went over to Charlestown with L. P. H., and took breakfast there."

"*May 18, Wednesday.* In the evening attended a meeting held at Bowdoin-Street Vestry by the young men of Bowdoin, Park, Salem, and Green-Street churches. The meeting was excellent."

"*Sept. 28, Wednesday.* A fine day. The annual muster took place to-day at South Boston Point, and about twenty-two companies were present. In the afternoon I had liberty "to go and see the soldiers." I did not go to muster; but after dinner I went over to Chelsea, and bought me a fine pair of stout winter boots, custom-made. Returned home before four, and wrote the rest of the afternoon and evening."

The day after he was twenty years of age, he "bought two feet of wood, and in the evening L. P. H. and himself got it in and sawed it once;" probably that he might make his private room sufficiently warm to write during the approaching winter months. From these two paragraphs, youths can get some notion of the manner in which young Walter Aimwell spent his limited time and his more limited means.

Much of his leisure during the year 1842, was spent in writing; yet he read about half-a-dozen good books,

besides miscellaneous reading. He also visited Salem, Mount Auburn, and Fresh Pond; Woburn, New York, Hoboken, Jersey City, Brooklyn, and West Point. His "balance on hand" this year was seven dollars and forty-three cents.

"Oct. 30, 1843. Pleasant. This is to me a memorable day. It completes my twenty-first year, and, of course, closes my apprenticeship. This is with me, as with most others, an event of no small interest, and one to which I have long looked forward with hope and pleasure, though occasionally with some anxiety and fear. I have devoted six years, six months and nineteen days to the acquisition of a trade, all of which time I have spent in the office of W. S. Damrell. But now my apprenticeship is finished; and, according to the testimony of some of my older fellow-printers, I have seen the pleasantest days of my life. Last Saturday evening I entered into an agreement to work for Mr. Damrell, and he promised to employ me as long as he could supply any journeyman with work. As I have always liked my trade, I hope and trust I shall always find enough to do at it." (He never failed in that respect. Trades are like folks, — they like those that like them.) "As to 'freedom presents,' I have received to-day a handsome

pocket-Bible from a friend who has worked in the office some time, but recently left; and also two cents and one copper from three other friends belonging to the office! Verily, charity aboundeth!”

Among his papers has been found the subjoined, dated October 31, 1843; that is, the next day after he had completed his twenty-first year:—

“Believing it is my duty to give what assistance I am able to the benevolent and religious objects with which I conscientiously sympathize, I have thought a systematic plan of laying by, as the Lord shall prosper me, what I am able to give these objects, might now be well adopted, as I am commencing life for myself; consequently, I have determined, so long as the Lord shall prosper me and enable me to do it, to lay by one-twentieth of all the means I earn from this date, and consider it as sacredly devoted to objects of charity, especially religious benevolence.”

“*Dec. 31, 1843. Sabbath.* I have seldom heard a sermon in which I was so intensely interested. . . . The argumentative part was instructive, new and interesting; and the persuasive and admonitory, intensely solemn. The whole was characterized by a beauty of expression and purity of language which I seldom hear. But much

as I admired the preacher, I think the man was comparatively lost amid the impressions that his sermon produced." It was a stranger who preached.

"*Jan. 1, 1844.* The new year was ushered in with a clear sky and a bright sun; and brought with it its usual salutations and good wishes. As usual, I received enough of the latter, though favored with nothing of a more substantial character. I had the pleasure, however, of making three presents." These were to his mother, his room-mate, and a young lady who had previously shown him kindness.

During a part of January and of February of the year 1844, the weather was unusually cold, and nearly all the harbors of New England were frozen up.

"*Feb. 1.* The British steamer was to have sailed to-day, but could not get out of the harbor. The proprietors of the ice establishment at Fresh Pond have entered into a contract to cut a channel out of the harbor, and commenced this morning. They have completed about three miles to-day, and seven more remain to be done. Thousands of persons have been out on the harbor to-day, and the skating which it affords has been well improved. After work in the evening, there being a good moon, I went down with L. P. H. nearly as far as the

Castle ; and, after wandering about some time, we went over to Cunard Wharf and looked at the Britannia ; after which I returned, and read the whole of a new book."

February 16th he went to Salem, and "first of all," he called upon Sarah Mugford, with whom he "spent half an hour most pleasantly." Sarah Mugford had once formed a part of his mother's household.

During the spring of this year he lost the pastor of whom he had been saying almost continually since he joined the church, he "preached an excellent sermon." It seems to have been a great loss to him ; and it is doubtful if any other quite took his place in the estimation of Walter Aimwell.

"*May 27.* After supper I went out to attend the annual meeting of the Peace Society. On my way I was detained for a short time, in consequence of meeting the Phalanx with the Brigade Band. The meeting at Winter Street being rather dull, I came out and dropped into Park Street, where the Education Society were holding their anniversary. On my way home I encountered another strong temptation, — the Brass Band at the head of a Temperance procession, — and, after listening to their music for a while, I again started home, but encountered one more company on my way."



“*May 28.* The Greys had a fine parade with the Brigade Band. After tea, I unexpectedly came in contact with them, and I could not withstand the temptation to take a short walk with them.”

“*May 29.* In the evening I attended a meeting at Central Church, at which illustrations of various styles of church music were given by a very large and excellent choir, under the direction of Lowell Mason. It was a rich feast.”

In August, he was offered the situation of foreman of the “Bangor Gazette,” at an increase of wages; but he “concluded it was not advisable” to accept it.

Thanksgiving-day he “passed very pleasantly, and also accomplished considerable on his new book.”

“*Dec. 31.* Worked this evening on the “Reflector” until ten o’clock, as there has been much necessary delay in getting out the first number enlarged.”

#### “SUMMARY FOR 1844.

“It appears from the foregoing pages that, during the past year, I have attended one hundred and thirty-eight religious and church-business meetings; have been present at Sabbath school fifteen times, and have visited Charlestown sixty-one times. I have spent one hundred and

thirty evenings in writing, fifty-four in reading, thirteen in practising music, worked six evenings, and spent six in amusement, visiting, etc. During the year I have read the following books: 'Prescott's History of Ferdinand and Isabella,' three volumes; 'Letters on the Spanish Inquisition;' 'Thomson's Seasons;' 'Paradise Lost;' 'Paradise Regained;' 'Rasselas;' 'Life of Byron;' 'Matins and Vespers,' by Bowring; 'Pollok's Course of Time.' I have also read the Bible through nearly twice, besides considerable miscellaneous reading and hundreds of newspapers."

"This year the balance on hand is one hundred and twenty-eight dollars and thirty-eight cents."

"*Jan. 9, 1845.* Heard to-day of the acceptance of the manuscript I sent to the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society."

"*Jan. 27.* Practised music and wrote in the evening."

"*Feb. 1.* The copy of my new book came into the office and was commenced upon."

"*Feb. 5.* The streets are completely imbedded in snow. This evening I practised on my melodeon."

"*Feb. 12.* In the evening I *did nothing*." It is not a wonder that he underlined these two words. It is

doubtful if, on any other evening, he could truthfully record them of himself.

“ *March 6.* This evening I called at three boarding-houses, and finally concluded to go to one in Green Street; and accordingly I made preparations for moving.”

“ *March 8.* To-day I left my boarding-place at Mr. B.’s, and this evening took up my abode in Green Street. It is always unpleasant for me to change my boarding-place; but in this instance it is doubly so from the fact that I am compelled to part with my old and long-tried friend, L. P. H. We have roomed together for more than three years, and have seen many happy days together.”

“ *March 10. Monday.* Another cold, dull, and gloomy day. Not yet having become ‘naturalized’ in my new boarding-place, and being destitute of a ‘chum,’ my feelings seem to sympathize with the weather. I spent the evening at Mr. B.’s, where I called to get some things.

“ *March 10.* In the evening, I read a proof-sheet of ‘The Sinner’s Friend.’ ”

“ *March 25.* Verily, this is a world of changes. Having relinquished my right and title to the large chamber I have occupied during my residence in my present

boarding-place, this evening I took possession of a smaller one, fronting on the street, which I am to have exclusively to myself. This is rather a lonesome way of living, especially to me, after having enjoyed myself so much with my late room-mate, L. P. H."

"*April 14.* This afternoon I received -from Mr. Dean a copy of 'The Sinner's Friend,' and the bill for the copyright of the same. I am much pleased with the appearance of the book. The committee feel considerable curiosity to know the name of the author, and say they think he ought to disclose himself. Mr. Dean has invited me to write another book. I spent the evening principally in looking over my new volume."

"*April 22.* Wrote in the evening, and completed the plan and foundation of a new book that I intend to write."

"*April 29.* At six o'clock this morning I went to Marlborough Chapel and took my first lesson in phonography. The class is quite large, and commences under good auspices. In the evening I studied phonography and practised music."

For a few weeks after this, he takes a phonographic lesson every morning, and divides his evenings between phonography and music.

“*May 23.* Spent the evening with the rest of the boarders, in the room of Mr. and Mrs. F. I took my melodeon with me, and on the whole we had a very pleasant time.”

“*June 2.* This morning I treated myself to a new notion, and took a lesson in French ! My phonographic lessons continue through this week ; and if I attend the French lessons, I shall be obliged to lose three of the phonographic. But I did not regret this much, as Mr. Boyle told us last Friday morning that we then had all the principles of the science, and all the future lessons would be practice, which, owing to my near-sightedness, I can pursue to better advantage at home.”

And now, in the midst of music, French, and phonography, this young man assumes the editorial charge of the “*Christian Reflector*,” a religious weekly, for the purpose of enabling Rev. Mr. Graves, the editor, to take a voyage to the South. And, therefore, in addition to the usual reading, writing, French, music, phonography, interviews of friendship and religious meetings, we read of mornings and evenings devoted partly to “writing editorials.”

“*July 1. Tuesday.* And the strangest July I ever experienced. I arose at six this morning, dreading for

some time to get up, it was so cold ! I dressed, and then wrapped myself in my cloak, and sat down and studied French until breakfast-time. When I got to the office, the first thing I did was to make some fire. It has been unpleasant, and rained some, and the wind is east. Thus much for the weather. To-day the new post-office law goes into effect. It is one of the best reforms of the day. In the evening I finished reading ‘Headley’s Letters from Italy,’ a very entertaining book, which came to me by virtue of my office as editor, *pro tem.*, of the ‘Christian Reflector ;’ which office, by the way, I am thankful I shall soon lose. I have had the whole responsibility of the paper.”

The columns of the “Reflector” during Mr. Graves’ absence give no token that they are in young and untried hands. Indeed, the articles, in dignity, variety, judiciousness, interest, and power, would do credit to a veteran in the profession ; and especially does this apply to those from Walter Aimwell’s own pen. Here is the conclusion of a column on “The Hope of Glory :” —

“Ministers of the everlasting God, ye who preach the gospel of his Son, will ye not be zealous in your addresses to wake up the consciences of your ungodly hearers to consider the slippery places on which they stand ? For



your encouragement, we present an anecdote respecting Archbishop Leighton. This distinguished English divine lived about two hundred years ago. At that time, the monarch of England was favorable to the introduction of Popery into his kingdom, and to its patronage by the government. He engaged on his side some of the leading bishops of the English church. Leighton, however, stood aloof from their evil counsels, and continued faithfully to preach the cardinal principles of the gospel. Some of his brethren called upon him and remonstrated, begging him to preach on the 'times,' meaning thereby to engage his influence in the cause of Romanism. 'Do you wish me,' said he 'to preach on the times? Who are they who preach on the times?' He was answered, 'All the brethren are preaching on the times.' 'If all the brethren,' said Leighton, 'are preaching on the times, you ought certainly to allow one poor brother to preach Jesus Christ and eternity.' Ye who preach on the times, the novelties of the world, and are men-pleasers, remember what Paul says, 'If I yet seek to please men, I should not be the servant of Christ.' "

The subjoined paragraphs are from an article of excellent tone, entitled, "The Contented Christian : " —

"It is evident that the contented Christian is a wise

one; for 'godliness with contentment is great gain.' Nor is it less apparent that he is a useful one. His example alone will accomplish more for the cause of his Master than will the example, precept, and labor united of many others who do not resemble him in this respect. He belongs, moreover, to the highest style of Christians. 'If,' says Andrew Fuller, — 'if amidst afflictions we be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and while we mourn do not murmur, we attain the highest perfection of which human nature is capable.' This is a perfection of which pagan moralists never dreamed, which Christian hypocrites never successfully counterfeited.

"A discontented Christian! What is he but a rebellious Christian? And if still in rebellion against God, has he not reason to fear that he has never been adopted into the great family of the redeemed? Can he not acquiesce in the will of that Being who now holds to him the relation of a Father and a friend? Cannot he, who is heir to the rich promises of grace, trust him who hath said that 'all things work together for good to them that love God'? Oh, discontented, repining Christian! repent at once of thy sin and folly, and in the strength of God face and conquer this fearful temptation, till thou canst say with Paul, 'I have learned in whatsoever state

I am, therewith to be content.' 'Tis impious in a good man to be sad,' — yes, thrice impious when that sadness is the result of a discontented mind."

July 21st he quietly records an accident, which probably caused him not a little annoyance : —

"This afternoon the fourth page of this week's 'Reflector' was almost entirely thrown into *pi*, through the carelessness of the wheelman, who was lifting it from the press. More than half of it was nonpareil, and the greater part of the form was landed on the bed of the press upside down."

In the latter part of this month, he, in company with a younger brother, started on a journey into Maine. Of the incidents of this visit he gave a condensed account in his journal ; but only one extract will be made, and that one chiefly because it is likely that the principal part of that definite knowledge of some things pertaining to this State, which helps render the Aimwell stories lifelike and interesting, was obtained at this time : —

"In spite of the mud and rain, however, I enjoyed the ride very much ; though at one time J. was quite sick. The road ran parallel with the Kennebec, and the scenery was beautifully diversified. What added much to my pleasure was the fact that our only companion was an

exceedingly 'knowing' and communicative old settler, who can recollect when the towns around us contained but two or three houses, and who gave us to understand that he owned two or three stage lines, had been sent to the legislature, had a son in Waterville College, and, in short, was himself no inconsiderable character. As he is perfectly familiar with the history and present condition of Maine, I picked up considerable useful information from the old gentleman."

In whatever situation Walter Aimwell might be placed, one might venture to say he "picked up considerable useful information." Whatever passed under his observation was sure to be "useful," at one time or another. It may be supposed that some kinds of information are useless; some, very much worse than useless; but he always was on the right side of all knowledge that can be honestly obtained, and saw it in a good light; and when the idea was well assimilated, in its appropriate place it swelled the muscle or flushed the beauty of the thought in his earnest pages.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE YOUNG EDITOR.

IN 1845, soon after completing his twenty-third year, he received a call from a stranger, who wished to establish a new weekly paper in Boston, and who had heard Walter Aimwell and his brother mentioned as persons suitable to assist in the enterprise. Walter Aimwell was at once favorably impressed by the plans proposed by Mr. W.; but it was not until after repeated discussions, that the copartnership contract was signed and the business fairly commenced. In the forenoon of December 9th, 1845, he got the 'Reflector' ready for the press, for the last time; and at noon, he left Mr. Damrell's employ, after having worked for him nearly nine years. One who was an apprentice in the same office, and who is now an editor, bears testimony that he was a good printer, remarkable for his "clean proofs and handsome jobs, and a great favorite with all the office-hands." From the beginning of conversation upon the subject until the complete establishment of the paper, and, indeed, until it was

finally sold, the principal portion of the labor in the editorial department, and of the general oversight of all departments, seems to have fallen upon Walter Aimwell. The first numbers of the new candidate for public favor were published about the beginning of the year 1846.

To show how well he maintains the regular habits with which he commenced his private journal, I copy the summary for 1845 :—

“ During the past year I have attended one hundred and thirty-six religious meetings, one temperance meeting, and one wedding. I have spent fifty-six evenings in writing, fifty-three in reading, forty in the study and practice of music, fifty in the study of French, eighteen in working or attending to business, and ten in company. I have also spent twenty-two mornings in the study of phonography, and thirty-six in the study of French. I have visited Charlestown fifty-six times, and spent one week in travelling, having visited Hallowell, Augusta, Waterville, Portland, Portsmouth, Newburyport, and Salem. I have been blessed with good health throughout the year, and have succeeded in getting into business with a good prospect ahead.”

In his records for the year 1846 it is very common to meet with entries signifying that he worked in the office



until nine or ten o'clock in the evening, and at home until eleven, twelve, and one o'clock.

In the Bible there are several intimations that the descendants of sincerely pious persons inherit a peculiar blessing. I have already alluded to the character of his deceased father. Here I copy a passage in reference to another relative, now no longer an inhabitant of earth:—

“At two o'clock this afternoon, grandmother died. She has been very low ever since last summer, and her mind has wandered most of the time, with the exception of one day last week, when reason returned, and she spoke of her sickness, prayed earnestly for her children, and expressed a desire to depart and be with her Saviour.”

After some changes in the proprietorship of the new paper, made during the first six months of its existence, the following is found in the record for July 1st: “To-day I became sole editor of the ‘Saturday Rambler.’ I have edited the paper ever since its commencement, with the exception of a part of the first three numbers; but Mr. W. now gives it entirely up to me; and, as we are soon to have a clerk, I shall have more leisure to devote to it. This is quite an era in my life; for, during several years past, I have been looking forward to just such a situation as the one I am now to fill.”

In November, a new organ, that had been built for him at East Medway, was set up in his mother's residence in Charlestown; and, from that time until the day of his death, it afforded him the means of a favorite recreation. His personal expenses this year, including his organ, books, and religious and benevolent contributions, were less than seven hundred dollars; and of this sum religion and charity took upwards of eighty dollars. His personal receipts were about thirteen hundred dollars; and the prospect in his business was highly promising.

Although he continued, as long as he lived, to keep an accurate account of all personal pecuniary affairs, no more will be copied, because his principles and practice in regard to them have been sufficiently shown by these summaries taken from his days of youthful privation, and from these later ones of sufficiency and promise.

At the beginning of the year 1847, he dissolves partnership with three members of the firm, and himself and his brother H. take the whole of the "Rambler."

Early this year, also, he met for the first time the young lady with whom he afterwards became united in marriage.

Of the year 1847, he remarks that "it has been one of continual prosperity in my affairs. My health has

been perfect, my plans prospered, and my spirits good ; and, though it has been a year of severe toil, it has been one of almost unbroken happiness."

In the early part of the year 1848, he is invited to join another gentleman in the conduct of a magazine ; but he declines the offer. After considering some time the expediency of himself undertaking the publication of a new monthly, he matures his plans, and makes definite calculations. Finally, he commences work upon it ; and soon after we read the following in his journal : —

"*June 2, Friday.* Pleasant and mild. It has been a day of trial and anxiety to me. After waiting all the week to have one form worked, I was obliged this afternoon to take them away from —, and send them into H.'s. The paper is dried up and works badly. . . Thus far I have been balked in almost every effort I have made for the magazine. In addition to our trouble with the hand I engaged for foreman last week, Mr. — put us to a good deal of trouble by a mistake in counting out the paper, by which a thousand short of the number were printed, and nearly all the outside had to be reset."

Soon after this we occasionally find the record of a day passed in mental pain and anxiety on account of some pecuniary disappointment.

The day that he was twenty-six years of age, he mentions a new source of trouble : —

“The boy named ——, whom I took as an apprentice a few weeks ago, was in the office yesterday (Sunday), with another boy, and amused himself by breaking the windows in an unoccupied house back of the office by throwing type at them. I sent for the owner of the building, and brought the boy before him ; and he concluded to let the young scamp off on his paying damages.”

“*Oct. 31.* I am still overwhelmed with trouble in my business. The first sheet of the November number of the ‘Library’ is not yet printed. . . . Heard this morning that my clerk is sick with a fever, — another great inconvenience. . . . H—— is almost worn down with anxiety on my behalf. Everything seems to go wrong, and each succeeding week becomes worse than the last.”

This year was not an easy one for business men generally, and Walter Aimwell was not alone in suffering pecuniary difficulties. But all his troubles did not arise from the general condition of monetary affairs. No doubt a part must be attributed to a degree of dishonor in the character of some with whom he had dealings which a man of his purity and principle would not be likely to suspect.”

“*Saturday, Nov. 25.* Another week of care and anxiety is over, and I find myself anxiously counting the remaining ones before I can hope for a decided relief!”

Very slowly, very conditionally, and with the continual deferring of hope which so unnerves the will and wearies the heart, came relief. He was not a man given to complaining, but here he makes a simple statement of his general experience for the year 1848:—

“The past year has opened a new chapter in my experience. I have felt more the *realities* of life than in any former year; and for the first time I have begun to learn what is meant by care and anxiety. The year 1848 has been a most trying one for business men, and perhaps I have had but my share of difficulty; but the trouble I have had in managing my business, and the unprecedented labor I have had to perform, have proved a burden from which I would gladly escape. The result has been that I have sold one-half the ‘*Rambler*’ at considerably less than its estimated value, for the purpose of securing assistance and relieving me of a part of my labor.”

On the first of January, 1849, he enters the marriage relation with Miss M. A. C. Bodge, of whose amiable qualities it is not becoming for me in this place to speak.

In the latter part of the year 1848, he received some assistance both in pecuniary matters, and in the labor of conducting the business, but only so much as took off the actually unsupportable part of the burden ; still remained as much to bear and to do as he seemed able to endure or to accomplish. Day after day, week after week, month after month, the short, significant, daily entries make the reader's heart ache for the genuine suffering of an earnest and honest man, thrown, by the requirements of business intercourse, into relations so formal and artificial in their nature as to be of themselves somewhat distasteful to his eager, loving spirit, and also into the unmanageable perplexities that come when, for any reason, the complicated system of formal relations that is called the business world, is in any degree deranged. To all this, add contact with honest misfortune, blundering carelessness, selfishness in the degree of unblushing dishonor, and wilful malice, and we can conjecture a little of the much that this pitying, earnest, generous, honorable man was called to endure.

At one time, in calmer days, Walter Aimwell seriously contemplated entering the ministry. He was dissuaded from it by a gentleman older than himself, and already in the profession, on account of the severe and injurious toil to which almost all the clergy are subject.



Walter Aimwell was not afraid of labor, intense or prolonged. From the years when he became responsible for his own behavior he scarcely lost in idleness a minute of his life ; but he was persuaded that such duties would materially shorten a life which, being prolonged, might finally accomplish more good in the world by labor in other departments. Conscientiously he submitted to disappointment in one of the dearest wishes of his heart, and God knew how to turn his wish and abilities into the channel where they were most needed ; but surely it is not possible that many pastors have more to try the heart or task the brain or exhaust the body than fell to the lot of Walter Aimwell, the editor and publisher.

To show his almost daily experience, a few passages in his own words are now quoted ; and let it be remembered that this suffering was all in secret. Until the storm was almost over, even his wife knew nothing of all that he was combating and enduring. A few hours of utter physical prostration, now and then, were all the outward tokens, and one would not be led by such a sign alone to surmise the presence of mental anguish. The boy at the office might happen to see him in his private room with his face wet with tears, but he heard no complaint.

One day when a note was due, at twelve o'clock he had but a few dollars toward it. He says, "I suffered extremely in mind ; but, by the blessing of God, I succeeded in raising the whole amount in season. I am truly passing through the furnace, but have blessings to be thankful for in the midst of my trials. I trust my present experience, though bitter now, will not be without its fruit."

"*April 30.* Alas for my hopes ! I have been most cruelly disappointed in my calculations. We have made arrangements with *four* different men to get the money, every one of whom disappointed us ; and, to cap the climax, Mr. B. was not able to raise a cent at ———. I never knew such a series of unlucky failures before, and I hardly know what way to turn next. A week ago I did not suppose there was a doubt that I should be able to raise ——— dollars this week, and I promised more than I otherwise should. But all is for the best, and I must trust to Providence instead of my own calculations."

"*May 4.* It has been a truly wretched day with me, — the anxiety, disappointment, and shame exceed everything hitherto. And yet I got through this horrible day after a fashion. Hope still bears me up ; for I recognize in this trial the hand of a kind Father, and I

can but believe that he will soon bring me forth from it a wiser and a better man. How touching is the thought that —

‘ The very hand that strikes the blow  
Was wounded once for me ! ’

These trials, though for the present not joyous but grievous, have, I trust, been already a blessing to me ; and I hope that my daily record of them, as it hereafter reminds me of my mental suffering, will also keep green in memory the lessons they have taught me.”

“ *May 11.* Another day of torture. The anguish of mind I have endured yesterday and to-day surpasses description. Except remorse of conscience, it seems to me there can be no worse suffering than I am now experiencing. My hope and confidence are still strong, though H. told me to-day he believed I should be obliged to fail within a month.”

Speaking of an unfortunate action of some who were his friends, he says, “ I am almost discouraged, for no surer way to break me down could have been adopted.”

Again, he says, “ No one knows the bitterness of my life ; but, after all, I feel that I have much to be thankful for, even in these trials.”

“It has been a day of almost perfect misery. Astonished as I was at such treatment from such a source, I succeeded in keeping calm ; but God only knows what I have suffered to-day. I have almost lost all hope ; my plans are frustrated at every step, and all my struggles and efforts seem to avail nothing.”

I have copied several of these extracts relating to his pecuniary difficulties, simply to show the delicacy and depth of his feelings. As far as his experience was merely pecuniary, I do not suppose it was at all exceptional. These difficulties occurred at a time when almost every man in active business was more or less disappointed in his calculations, and perplexed in the attempt to adjust his affairs in a manner satisfactory to himself and his business connections. But while numbers failed, and thus divided, or rather multiplied their perplexities among their creditors and dependents, Walter Aimwell, with the hopeful nerve of a hero, and the pious patience of a martyr, persevered in his exhausting labors, and endured his continual vexations. If it be true that angels, holier and wiser than we, look on earth with interest in the affairs of men, some must have loitered with solemn sympathy as they passed near the solitude in which Walter Aimwell silently grappled with the earth-life.

He conquered. He came out of the conflict with unsoiled brow, and eyes still calmly looking heavenward.

Of this eventful year he says, "I commenced it by 'taking to myself a wife,'—a step I have not yet for one moment regretted. In my domestic relations I have been as happily situated as I could desire. I have also during this year exchanged a city for a country home, where I expect to permanently locate myself. In this, too, I consider myself peculiarly fortunate, having secured a home in all respects to my mind, and not expensive either. But the most prominent feature in the past year has been in my business affairs. I have experienced an amount of suffering which I can hardly look back upon without shuddering. I have, for months at a time, been sadly pressed for pecuniary means, and brought so near to bankruptcy that I had little hope of escape. I have been driven to the necessity of discontinuing the 'Library'" (that was the name of the monthly magazine that he started a year or two before), "and raising the price of the 'Rambler.' But, in the midst of these trials, I have experienced the deliverance of a kind Providence; and, though often cast down, I have never been utterly forsaken. The last month of the year has

been preëminently a bright one, and the prospect is as fair as I could desire. I am, indeed, relieved for the present from all pecuniary anxiety; and, though I do not expect a plethora of money for a year or two, I think I shall hereafter have less trouble in my business than I have heretofore experienced."

During this period of mingled gloom and brightness, he was obliged to part with a youth whom for some time he had employed in the office, and of whom, in his journals, he speaks in the highest terms. Since then, by a pleasant coincidence, he became a neighbor to his former employer, in consequence of having been settled as a pastor in the same town. He became religious while engaged in the "Rambler" office, and the fact gave great satisfaction to Walter Aimwell. Let him now testify, with the eloquence of genuine gratitude, what he knew of Walter Aimwell:—

"I remember no man with whom I was ever connected in business relations with stronger feelings of gratitude and love. He was the kindest friend of my early years. He always took a great interest in my then present welfare, and my future happiness. As an evidence of this, I can cite the following: While in the office I was taken sick, and was confined at home for six weeks.



During that time he frequently called upon me, and every week my mother received my wages. After I recovered, he ascertained the amount of the doctor's bill and paid it himself. This, if I remember rightly, was at the time of his own pecuniary losses and embarrassments. It is not necessary for me to say that I *loved* him. I not only loved, but I pitied him. For at that time he was suffering greatly from the dishonest dealings of his agents. I have seen again and again the tears in his eyes, as he has said to me and others, 'I cannot pay you this week.' He felt a hundred times worse than we did at such times. I have known him, after he had thus stated his inability to pay his employees, close the door of his editor's room, and there, alone, give way to his grief. He always had a word of counsel and advice for me. He seemed to understand and to feel the peculiarities of my condition. He furnished me with books, gave me the privilege of his library, and was always happy to answer any question that I asked him; so that I looked upon him more as a friend, a brother, or father, than an employer. Through his advice and assistance I was thus enabled to make that progress in study of which I had been deprived by my removal from school at an early age; so that I can safely say that to his encouragement

and advice, given when I had just left school, I owe much of my success, and much of the literary tastes I have since had. His advice when I left him to go into another business, which was occasioned by a change on his part as well, I have never forgotten. Of all the men I have ever known, my recollections of him are the best."

## CHAPTER X.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

**A**LTHOUGH the subject of our memoir was early taken from the shelter of home and placed outside of the usual sphere of the protecting influence of family love, he did not seem to come into very intimate contact with the world at large ; he was *in* the world, but not *of* it.

He had a theory, without doubt, that all men are liable to do wrong, both ignorantly and perversely ; but he had not what might be called a *realizing faith* in the fact, if the idea did not debase and contaminate a noble term. That assured confidence in the existence of evil not actually known to exist, which is the dark counterpart of a good man's faith in good not yet revealed, formed no part of Walter Aimwell's character.

It was his own way to try to do what he thought was right ; and, moreover, to endeavor, to the extent of his ability, to examine a purpose on all sides, and probe it to its central motive, before he acted ; and in this manner

to do everything possible to make sure that his thought concerning the morality of his act was a correct thought. He was not satisfied to have his act right according to his thought ; but he strove to have his thought agree with the eternal thought of God upon the same subject.

He seemed to expect something of the same moral and mental qualities in others, until, in each individual case, it was plainly proved that there was little or nought of these traits in them. He appeared to know comparatively nothing of the blurred moral vision, the hasty, headlong conscience, the flabby, flimsy purpose, which are to be met on every side.

Had he undertaken only such purposes as can be accomplished mainly without the coöperation of others, it is likely he would have easily succeeded, even giving to success the worldly interpretation. But working in connection with, and therefore in some degree of dependence upon, others, he was continually balked ; and the object that he could have carried with comparative ease, if he could have carried it alone, almost pulled him to the earth when some, assuming to be helpers, hung upon it as so much dead weight to be also carried along.

Well, it was carried, dead weight and all. The "Rambler" kept an excellent reputation for moral tone, for sprightliness, for intelligence, for literary finish.

Often had the aching soul cried out as a child to the father in whom he confides. Now, the overtasked body told, in a terrible way, of the anguish it had sympathized with and the vigils it had kept.

On the 13th of June, 1850, before rising in the morning, Walter Aimwell was suddenly seized by a fit of bleeding at the lungs. He was alone, but soon succeeded in calling the attention of the family. The usual remedies were applied, and a physician sent for. The hemorrhage was not of long duration, and at noon he was getting along very well.

The next day the doctor told him that he thought his lungs not yet diseased, though they were not in a condition to be tested; but he assured his patient that his life would be a short one unless he changed his habits; that he must not so closely confine himself to business, and that he needed more exercise and more sleep.

Six days after this, the invalid, though still very weak, went down-stairs for the first time, and prepared a little copy for his paper. Ten days afterwards, in company with the family, he rode to his office in Boston, and found things there "in fine shape, — Mr. G. having had the counting-room cleaned, painted, carpeted, etc."

His monetary troubles continuing, in spite of continual

improvement in the real condition of his property, and a deadly disease threatening him, it seemed expedient for him to accept an offer made by the proprietors of the "New England Farmer." Accordingly, in November, 1850, a bargain was concluded, by which the "Rambler" was merged in the "New England Farmer," and Walter Aimwell was employed as general editor at a fixed salary. This arrangement, while it diminished the amount of his property, in greater ratio diminished his perplexities, and took from his mind a great responsibility, giving him both more leisure and more freedom; and much of his time was now spent at his pretty home in Melrose. "Rather a hard finale," he says, "for five years of incessant devotion to business; but I doubt not it is all for the best; and as long as I have my health and a chance to work, I will not complain."

Having now some leisure that he can honestly take from his business, he begins to stimulate the young church in his neighborhood to greater activity. He cannot be idle and contented; and he has so much practical knowledge, and his abilities are so varied, that when industry is checked in one direction, he can readily turn it to some other channel.

Here is his record for Friday and Saturday of the first week in February, 1851:—



“ *Friday.* A very cold day. Having decided to stereotype enough more pages of the ‘Library’ to make a good-sized volume, I had my type, cases, stand, etc., brought home this afternoon, and I intend to do the composition at my leisure, with assistance from A. [his wife], who intends to learn the art. I spent the principal part of the evening in writing.

“ *Saturday.* Saw Mr. N. again to-day about an organ for our church. . . . Have written up considerable matter ahead this week, and have also kept an account of the time spent in various duties during the week, with the view of systematizing my work. I find that I have spent seventeen hours in preparing editorial, twelve hours in examining exchanges, seven and a half in preparing news, four and a half in reading proof, and one in preparing outside copy. Deducting the extra editorial written, this would make a total of thirty-six hours, or six hours per day required by my editorial duties.”

See how his youthful habits of industry and systematic employment of time cling to him through all trials and changes.

One day in June he was much affected to find in his reading, in a letter from a missionary in Iowa, the following allusion to “The Sinner’s Friend,” the second book he had published : —

“The title of one of the invaluable works of this kind is ‘The Sinner’s Friend.’ I wish we had a few more copies of it. It does show the evils of sin as no other human publication does, according to my opinion. It leads a man to feel that he is a sinner, and that there is no help but in the merits of Christ. In fine, it humbles the creature, and exalts the Creator.”

This passage, perhaps, had its influence in determining him to finish “Thoughts for the Thoughtless,” a book commenced several years before. On the first day of November he offered the manuscript to the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, and on the twentieth of the same month he received a line from Mr. Dean, conveying “the welcome intelligence” that it was accepted, and would be published before the first of the coming year. A few days after, Rev. Mr. Bullard was in the office of the “Farmer,” and told him that those who had read the manuscript of his new book “spoke highly of it.”

On the fifth of December, in the forenoon, he read the proof of the fourth sheet of his new book; and learning from the printer that twelve more pages were needed to make a full form, he came home at noon, and had them fully completed before he retired for the night. On Christmas-day he went down to Charlestown to carry his mother a copy of his new book.

In February, he was pleased to learn that his new book was attracting considerable attention in his native city, although its authorship was unknown. "Nothing," he says, "gives me greater satisfaction than to learn that I am exerting a good influence through the medium of my little books."

A few days after "Thoughts for the Thoughtless" was published, he commenced writing another book for the young, entitled "The Boy's own Guide." As soon as this was completed, it was accepted by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, and by them shortly afterwards published; so that on Christmas of this year, as at the same time in the year preceding, he had the pleasure of carrying to his mother a new book of his own writing.

His place of residence in Melrose, although a pleasant house, prettily situated, was on such low ground that, on account of the delicacy of his lungs, it was deemed advisable for him to remove to a more elevated and drier locality. Accordingly, he purchased an estate in Winchester, upon a dry hill-side. He removed there in the spring of 1852, and immediately commenced making improvements upon both house and land, which he continued to do as long as he lived. It is pleasant now to

read of his light labors and useful pleasures in his garden, alternating with the congenial business of the editor and author.

This little home in Winchester is one of the prettiest of the many witnesses that stand up in favor of a republican government and a New England community, — the modest, but tasteful and commodious cottage, the sunny slope whose terraces are gay with home-flowers and exotics, and fragrant with various fruits, — the thoughtful master of the premises, now in his study penning the “words of truth and soberness” that are yet to move far-away hearts toward heaven ; now straying across the afternoon shadows and sunshine of his garden ; now, in the twilight, seated at the organ in his drawing-room, intrusting unspeakable yearnings to its breezy harmonies, — and ever attended by one, gentle and devoted, who shared, as she could, his toil in the study, his pastime in the garden, his walk in the field or wood, or his worship (for it was indeed of the nature of worship) with the organ.

The sun shines there still ; still the vines climb and the flowers bloom and the fruits ripen ; but, alas ! to the eyes that look out from its lonely chambers the best glory and brightness are gone.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE AIMWELL STORIES.

EARLY in February, 1853, Rev. Mr. Bullard called at the office of the "New England Farmer," and invited Walter Aimwell to write a series of "Letters to Boys," to be published in the "Well-Spring," of which the former gentleman was editor.

This invitation was accepted; and the letters were so well received that, after their publication in the juvenile periodical for which they were originally written, they were collected and revised, and published in book-form, under the title of "Boy's Book of Morals and Manners."

Walter Aimwell always had a genuine love of children and youth, and felt a hearty interest in their real welfare, especially their moral welfare. This love and this interest were stimulated, no doubt, by the great and uniform success that attended all his writings in their behalf.

About the time of the publication of these "Letters

to Boys," he proposed to himself the pleasure of writing a continuous story "to please the young," as he expressed it. The result was a story of considerable length, which he handed to a friend for perusal, asking an opinion. The friend gave a favorable criticism; and the author prepared it for the press, intending to offer it to the firm of Gould & Lincoln for publication. He called the story "Clinton."

He took the manuscript with him to Boston, and twice he reached the door of the publishers, and each time passed on without entering. Finally, his modesty was so far overcome that he enclosed and sent it to them.

Soon he received from these gentlemen a letter, saying they had perused the manuscript, and were much pleased with it; but that it would make a book too small for their purposes. If he would add as much more, they would undertake its publication upon their usual terms.

He went home and immediately commenced complying with their suggestion. A plan for the extension of "Clinton" was laid out that very afternoon.

Other engagements interfering, he could not complete the book at once; but in the latter part of September he carried it to the publishers.

They seemed to be pleased not only with the book,



but also with the man who wrote it ; and they proposed plans and made offers which were quite tempting to him, and would have been accepted if his health had been as hardy as it once was.

“Clinton” was published on the day before Christmas, 1853. It hardly seems necessary to tell the readers of the “Aimwell Stories” how very fortunate “Clinton” was in pleasing the public.

It will be recollected that the scene of this book is laid in the State of Maine. On one of “Mitchell’s Pocket Maps” he has marked the very spot where the incidents of this interesting story are supposed to occur. It is on the eastern side of the central portion of the county of Franklin, near the head-waters of an unnamed branch of the Kennebec. On the map he used, there is no town located very near. Brookdale, no doubt, was a name of his own invention.

All the places and persons described existed in his mind with as much distinctness, apparently, as if the scenes had been long familiar to him, and the persons were those with whom he was intimately acquainted. To the only friend with whom he freely conversed upon the subject, he always spoke of them as really existing. Yet he never was very near the locality selected for his story,

nor is it known that a single character was taken from among his acquaintances. He often expressed a determination to visit, at some favorable opportunity in the future, this part of Maine, that he might compare plain, unvarnished fact with fancy, which, indeed, was equally plain and unvarnished.

The welcome that "Clinton" received from the public was the crowning pleasure and success of the year 1853, which was, throughout, a year of prosperity to Walter Aimwell. There was no return of the hemorrhage of the lungs, and his general health appeared good. The condition of his pecuniary affairs was improving, and to whatever he put his pen, it prospered.

Of course, the praise which "Clinton" received from youthful readers and from critics of high standing had not the effect to dampen the ardor of Walter Aimwell's interest in the young. In considering the amount and condition of juvenile literature, he was persuaded that authors had neglected the young far more than any other class in the community; and that there was really a deficiency of books calculated to be of use to them in the development of mind, and, above all, in the formation of good character. As does every other person sufficiently desirous of the improvement of society to think

much about the means of accomplishing it, he believed that the best and most effectual method lay in the right training of the young. He could not conceal from himself the fact that his pen was capable of achieving much in this useful and somewhat neglected department of human labor. It was something he could undertake without fear of failing in his duty in regard to engagements already formed. For some time he silently revolved these facts in his own mind, and by and by he consulted his publishers upon the expediency of writing a series of books for the young, of which "Clinton" should be one. These gentlemen were pleased with his plans, and agreed to publish the series.

If Walter Aimwell had undertaken to write the actual history of a State, I do not know that he could have taken more pains to ascertain the essential truth. He made boyhood a serious study. Whenever in his reading he met any fact directly or remotely bearing upon the subject, he carefully noted it. Such facts casually came to his attention in the many newspapers and other periodicals which, as editor of the *New England Farmer*, it was his duty to read. Besides this, he seems to have searched biographies and histories for accounts of the childhood and youth of all persons in any way distinguished.

Under the study-window of his pleasant cottage at Winchester, in the long summer afternoons, little children often came to play. Never dreaming that their characteristic features were being sketched, or that the music of their voices was being echoed, in childish freedom they frolicked and chatted away the sunny hours; and when their remarks appeared peculiarly striking, their silent and unseen friend copied them word for word. With such wise, patient, and faithful effort, could one of such sound philosophy, and such cultivated power of clear and unaffected expression, fail to write a lifelike, salutary, and successful book?

And here again is suggested another lesson which Walter Aimwell would love to have his young readers learn from his life, as we know he endeavored to teach it in his writings. If one wishes to do anything good or sensible, he must have a definite purpose and work definitely for its accomplishment. Nobody carelessly blunders into writing a good book, nor into anything else of lasting value. Some young persons think a great deal of what is called genius. I have heard a great deal of talk about genius, as if it were something with which some persons are endowed, by means of which they were enabled, in some inexplicable manner, to do great deeds

without thought or labor. I have known many different persons, and some whose performances very far excelled those of others in truthfulness and beauty of design and finish of workmanship; but I never had the fortune to see one of those human curiosities who succeed, as one may say, by accident, and without patience and effort. If a hearty love of truth, and a willingness patiently to work for it, is genius, no doubt Walter Aimwell had great genius; but so might have many a one who seems to be lying about the highways and byways of human society, apparently as useful as a loose pebble in the gutter.

At first, Walter Aimwell intended to call the proposed series by the name of the Right-Aim Stories; but he soon changed this title to the equally significant and more euphonious one of the "The Aimwell Stories." His plan embraced twelve volumes, in each of which he intended to portray, with especial distinctness, some one character or peculiar species of influence, and in all of which instruction and amusement should be agreeably and inseparably united.

Although "Clinton" was the first written, the incidents of "Oscar" are supposed to occur previous to those of the former volume; so that, in the order of time, "Oscar" is the first of the series.

On Thursday, the second day of March, 1854, he came home at half-past two o'clock and wrote the first six pages of "Oscar." The weekly paper of which he was general editor was published on Thursdays; and being more at leisure on the two following days than at any other time during the week, he wrote the principal portion of the "Aimwell Stories" on Fridays and Saturdays.

He formed distinct ideas not only of the characters of his young heroes and heroines, but also of their personal appearance. The date of the birth of each was carefully written in a little note-book which contained succinct accounts of their looks and moral and mental traits; and throughout that portion of the series which he lived to complete he continued to record the exact age of each, as well as the period at which each volume is supposed to commence and conclude. In this manner the stories became very real to him, every species of anachronism was avoided, and the characters and incidents seemed so life-like to his readers that judicious critics were induced to believe that these books were in large part actual histories of what had transpired under the author's observation.

Before "Oscar" was completed, that, with all other



labors, was suspended by the appearance of that symptom, full of painful meaning, which had once before alarmed his friends. On the morning of the Fourth of July, after having spent a restless night in consequence of the unhappy fashion in which rude boys, and boys, too, who are not altogether rude, indulge during the night preceding our national holiday, he discovered the critical condition of his lungs. In this instance he was calm, as he always was; and the ordinary remedies finding aid in the steadiness of the patient, he soon recovered a degree of strength. Gradually he resumed his usual round of occupations, and "Oscar" was finished in season to be published on the 13th of December, 1854.

On the evening preceding the publication of "Oscar," he began the third of "The Aimwell Series," called "Ella," which he succeeded in finishing before the end of the next May; and it was published in the latter part of August.

In the October following, he commenced "Whistler." He wrote but fifty pages before the close of the year 1855; for in December, after an interval of a year and a half, his lungs were again found to be in a bleeding state. Again nature rallied, and he resumed his duties;

but "Whistler" was not completed until about a year after it was begun.

His writings are in the hands of those who read these lines, and it is not necessary here to do more than remind readers of the faithfulness of Walter Aimwell's portraiture of boy-life. He received commendations of the truth and general excellence of these stories from all hands, both in the public prints and in private letters from those whose good opinion he especially valued. Passages from them were quoted and inserted in valuable school-books, and repeated at the exhibitions of academies and public schools. But he never suffered himself to be flattered into any relaxation of endeavor. However well he might have satisfied his friends, he never thought he had reached his own standard.

Accordingly, about the time that "Whistler" was completed, we find him saying in his journal, — referring to a boy whom he had just taken into his family, — "In the management of him, and in the direction of his studies (for he is to devote a part of his time to study), I anticipate meeting to some extent a want which I feel as a writer for youth, — the want of an actual and intimate contact with childhood, and an opportunity to study its wants, tastes, feelings, etc., from real life."

The want which the author himself felt, he never permitted his readers to perceive. Said a boy to one of Walter Aimwell's correspondents, "I guess Walter Aimwell hasn't forgotten when he was a boy himself." Read Walter Aimwell's reply to a letter from a friend of his young critic :—

"WINCHESTER, Mass., Dec. 26, 1857.

"DEAR MADAM, —

"It was a very agreeable surprise that the sight of your familiar handwriting gave me, as I opened your note of the 22d; for your writing still has a familiar look, though I do not know that I have seen a scrap of it before for half a dozen years. I cannot tell you how much pleasure the contents of your letter gave me, or how grateful I am for this kind and flattering notice of my little books. In the case of such books, so far at least as to their power to *interest*, children are the best critics, and their simple and artless commendation is worth far more than the most fulsome newspaper 'puff.' I love children, and love to write for them, and, as your little neighbor shrewdly guessed, have not quite forgotten how I felt when I was a boy myself; and I may add that I have no higher aspiration, in this world, than to acquire an influence over the minds of the young, and

leave upon them an impress for good that time shall not efface.

“I hope to extend the ‘Aimwell Stories’ up to ten or twelve volumes, and shall probably do so if my health holds out. I fully sympathize with you in sentiment, and shall take your suggestion into consideration. I have never thought much about the matter, for the reason that it would not comport with the design of these books to give special prominence to such a subject. Still it might be introduced incidentally.

“Please to give my respects to your husband ; and tell your little boy that Mr. Aimwell will think of him when he writes his next book, and will try to put something into it that he can understand. And, for yourself, dear madam, accept the assurance of the sincere esteem of

“Your obliged friend,

“WM. SIMONDS.”

In this connection, I transcribe a letter addressed by Walter Aimwell to J. O. B., a brother of the lad whom he had admitted to his family. I copy it not only because it proves the genuine interest he took in Edwin, but also because, on account of its general nature, each youth reading these pages may consider it addressed particularly to himself.

“WINCHESTER, Feb. 24, 1857.

“DEAR O, —

“Though I do not know that I ever saw you, my acquaintance with Edwin and the rest of the family leads me to feel quite an interest in you ; and I improve the opportunity to enclose a word or two in Edwin’s letter. Knowing the value of a letter from home and friends to a young man among strangers, I have often urged him to write to you. Now that he has broken the ice, I hope you will encourage him to continue the correspondence by contributing to it your share. It will not only keep up a brotherly interest and attachment between you, but it will be a good intellectual exercise for both of you.

“You have reached an interesting, and, in some respects, critical age ; and perhaps you do not sufficiently realize that the whole future direction of your life may be influenced by the bent you are now giving it. As I look back to my boyhood, I can now see that the whole course of my life was decided by purposes which I formed when about sixteen years old. I can assure you that the habit now acquired, of improving your leisure hours in study, and the reading of instructive books, and the frequent use of the pen, will prove of inestimable value to you hereafter ; while it will keep you from many

present temptations, and at the same time afford you more real present enjoyment than can be found in any of the frivolous amusements to which many young men resort for recreation. Such tastes and habits, united with purity of heart and life, fidelity to daily duties, an unbending loyalty to right, and reverence to God and his Word, constitute a better capital for a young man than gold, and a safer reliance than troops of rich friends.

“Your brother Edwin is getting along well, and has given entire satisfaction since he has lived with us. I trust that he and you and all your family will live to be useful and valued members of society.

“Yours truly,

“WM. SIMONDS.”

On the third of January, 1857, Walter Aimwell made a beginning of “Marcus,” and finished it upon the fifteenth of September of the same year.

Carefully laid away among the materials he was gathering for the “Aimwell Stories,” is the following letter, received soon after he commenced writing “Marcus.” It was written to him as editor of the “New England Farmer.” It is a pity that the printer has not any types that will fitly represent the penmanship of “one of them kind of boys.” Notwithstanding his ignorance, the



simple fact that he wrote the letter at all indicates that the lad possessed considerable mental force and independence of character. He addresses Mr. Simonds as Mr. N., thinking, I suppose, that the principal proprietor of the paper was the editor :—

“SALEM, Feb. 9, '57,

“MR. N

• “I now take my pen in hand to write to you before I begin I wish to tell you that I do not know you nor do you know me but I wish to tell you that I write to you for Advice. I want you to give me your advice to a boy like me. I am a boy 14 years old and I am one of them kind that dont like to go to school (but I am in school now) I always thought I should like *farming*. I have several times started to run away. I shall look for advice in your paper next Saturday night. (Be sure)

“I”

Walter Aimwell's reply has so much practical excellence that I will not forbear copying it in this place, although so doing leads me a little aside from my purpose in writing this chapter :—

“A young correspondent writes to us for advice. He describes himself as a boy of fourteen, and ‘one of them kind that don't like to go to school.’ He says he

is now attending school, but always thought he should like farming, and has several times 'started to run away.' Our young friend has not told us enough of his circumstances, character, or tastes, to enable us to give him anything more than very general advice, and what we shall say to him will be applicable to many other boys who have become tired of going to school.

" 'I don't like going to school' is a very common complaint with boys. We remember to have been once afflicted with it ourself; but deliverance came to us before we were as old as our correspondent, and we have rued the day ever since. We have learned a good many things since that time. One of them is, that going to school is far from being the most disagreeable thing a boy or a man ever has to do. Another is, that neither boy nor man need hope to have everything just to his mind, but must put up with many things that he does not like. Another is, that nothing truly valuable is attained in this world without labor, pains, and self-denial.

" Our young friend's uneasiness, we judge, arises from a too ardent desire for *present* indulgence and happiness, without sufficient thought of his future interests. He is unwilling to sow anything to-day which will not yield its harvest before night. He should endeavor to

correct this habit of his mind. If he is in circumstances that will admit of his attending school for two or three years longer, he ought to be thankful for it, and try to make the best of his privileges. *This is most certainly the course which he will hereafter wish he had taken.* But if he leaves school half-educated because it isn't pleasant, he will have an equally good reason for leaving any trade or profession he may afterwards adopt; and whatever he may become outwardly, he will never be a *man*, so long as he is guided by such sordid and short-sighted motives. Education is too precious a boon to be purchased without a struggle, but it is worth a thousand times all that it costs. The child that should prefer to go through the world toothless, rather than endure for a little while the pain of teething, would be less foolish than those children who would rather grow up in ignorance than subject themselves for a time to the labors and discipline of the schoolroom.

“We say, then, to our young correspondent, think less of making yourself happy, and more of doing your duty; or rather, try to find your happiness in doing your duty. Apply yourself diligently to your studies, and if you cannot find any present pleasure in the work, console and encourage yourself with the thought that you will here-

after be well paid for your pains. After two or three years, when your muscles have become sinewy and firm enough for hard labor, and your mind matured by discipline and study, choose your profession, and you will be able to pursue it in such a way that you will not always have to remain at the foot of the ladder. Your taste for farming is certainly a most hopeful feature in your case, and may be gratified and cultivated, even while you are at school, by reading, and in other ways. But do not 'run away,' unless you are abused beyond the limit of endurance. There are very few cases in which a boy is justified in taking this step; and even when justifiable, it may be far from wise.

"If our young correspondent desires further advice, and will send us a more particular account of his circumstances, giving us his real name, we will endeavor to meet his wishes, either through our columns or by private letter. Perhaps we ought to explain that the names of correspondents are considered confidential, and are not made public in connection with their articles or letters, unless they desire it."

On the third day of October, 1857, the story of "Jessie" was begun; and on the eighteenth of September of the following year it was concluded. This was the last original book that he lived to complete.

\* During a part of the time that he was engaged upon this juvenile series, he compiled a volume intended particularly for the perusal of those parents who had been called to part with little children. It was entitled "Our Little Ones in Heaven." It is a superior collection of prose and verse, and after being issued by his usual publishers in this country, it was republished in England.

Of the twelve volumes of which he intended to have the "Aimwell Stories" consist, only six had been published at the time of his death, namely:—

Oscar ; or, the Boy who had his own Way.

Clinton ; or, Boy-life in the Country.

Ella ; or, Turning over a New Leaf.

Whistler ; or, the Manly Boy.

Marcus ; or, the Boy-Tamer.

Jessie ; or, Trying to be Somebody.

The remainder of the series he had entitled

Jerry ; or, Young Jack ashore.

Emily ; or, the Young Housekeeper.

Ralph, the Tip-Top Boy.

Ettie ; ——— ———.

Ronald ; or, the Adopted Son.

Annie ——— ———.

Although, among his manuscripts, he has left some

vague hints of his intentions in regard to the unwritten volumes, they are such as none but himself could fully understand, and no other hand could venture to finish what he had commenced ; therefore, the fragment of "Jerry," which is published in this volume, must forever remain the last of the "Aimwell Stories."

"Jerry" was commenced on the twenty-eighth day of November, 1858, and its last lines were written on the twenty-second of January, 1859. In view of his increasing infirmity, he resolved that if he were not otherwise able to finish "Jerry" in season for publication in 1859, he would resign his place in the "New England Farmer" office on the first of July. At the close of the first week in July, he had resigned everything that earth could give.



## CHAPTER XII.

### THE END.

**S**LOWLY but steadily the forces of life yielded before the results of the great efforts he made in those fearful years preceding the sale of the "Rambler." It hardly seemed as though he were subject to any common disease, but he appeared to be dying for the reason that men of threescore-and-ten years die, — because he had done enough living, and because, happy as this life may become to a good man, he was prepared for enjoying a still happier one. And God did not long keep him from the heritage of saints.

Through the month of January, 1859, he was very comfortable, and accomplished considerable literary labor. Probably it was during this month that he wrote the last twenty pages of "Jerry."

When February came, fierce storms came also; and often Walter Aimwell was unable to go out for a day or two. Soon his visits to the office in Boston became very

irregular ; sometimes there were intervals between them of ten days, sometimes of three weeks. For more than a fortnight, he could not take a little ride about his own home. By and by, he cannot, for several days, even go out upon the piazza. Then, he leaves off going downstairs, because it is "so tiresome to come up again." To accommodate his swollen limbs, he lies abed all day. Occasionally comes a day when he feels better ; and if it is a pleasant day, and if some one of his kind neighbors is at home to assist him in getting into his carriage, he goes to ride. He procures some assistance in his editorial duties. At last he resolves to do nothing for the paper more than to attend to the fourth page. He ceases to record any labor accomplished, but, instead, mentions the reception of a woodcock, a pair of robins, a basket of grapes and flowers, a box of wild strawberries, or some other token of the respect and sympathy of kind neighbors and friends. This change in the record is significant.

Evidently, he is passing away ; but he observes the changes in his condition with the same unruffled tranquillity with which he watched the crimsoning of the leaves in the fall. He will soon leave pleasant employments and dear friends. If it were the will of God

that he should stay, he would be pleased ; yet he is wholly willing to go.

He is not going *to die*, to cease to exist ; he has no fear of that. Happy in his glorious faith, he waits to see what his good God is going to do with him. Long ago he placed his hand in God's ; it is there now, as he is going down into the valley. He feels no fear, no agitation. He accepts the pleasantness of the day, the kindness of his friends. He welcomes the joys, and does the duties, of the hour.

The sixth of July is too cold for him to take a ride ; but on the seventh, friends help him into his carriage, and that devoted one, who is ever his companion, takes the reins, and once more they pass through the scenes they have so often gazed upon together. It is the last time.

He returns refreshed and exhilarated by his little excursion, and entertains, with even more than his usual sociability, the friends who call upon him.

When all are gone, he retires to his bed. It is about ten o'clock. He coughs slightly. In a moment his wife is at his side. He cannot speak. In a few minutes he has ceased to breathe.

He has gone forever !

He is gone forever. Yet he has left behind pictures of himself, unwittingly sketched by his own faithful hand, — beautiful as they are true, as they are dear.

There is the innocent child, happy in Sabbath serenity and service ; the good boy, delighting himself in the pretty shop of the jeweller, and writing to his mother to the accompaniment of the charming music-box ; the lonely apprentice, tempted to spend the Sabbath in strolling about the city ; the youth, suddenly stopping himself in the path he has carelessly taken, and retiring to the solitude of his own chamber, and there, with sane seriousness, contemplating the great issues of life, and deliberately choosing to be an educated Christian gentleman, and calmly taking all practicable methods that he deems likely to strengthen and discipline his powers for that character ; there is the rapt young Christian, his whole being thrilling through and through with the divine harmonies of a soul at one with nature and with God ; the willing mechanic, cheerfully fettering his faculties to the most earthly of all innocent things — the acquisition of manual skill ; the devout worshipper “ in the spirit on the Lord’s Day,” and on other days, loosening every thought of earth, and drifting away among infinite things on the waves of a church anthem ; there is the profound thinker,

unravelling the golden thread of eternal truth from the tangled conscience of a kitchen-maid; the enthusiastic worker gladly putting on the harness of the public journalist; the uncrowned martyr of the broker's office bleeding to death in secret, rather than violate, openly or secretly, his moral sense; the genial gentleman, offering to the clasp of others the warm hand of friendship and the not empty one of charity; the mature Christian, in full armor straightening and steadying himself against the shock of ingratitude and dishonor; the wounded conqueror, tenderly borne from the battle-field by the hands of angels, visible and invisible, to heal and grow young again on the happy slopes of heaven.

Are not these life-pictures beautiful, glorious? Who would not rather such should be the history of his own life, than stand idly by while the years, one after another, drop away from his allotted time, even though he outlast the threescore and ten?

And yet, as has been before intimated, the whole secret of such a life seems to be the early adoption of, and unwavering adherence to, a complete system of Christian morals. Any New England boy of ordinary abilities, if he will, can compass all that. It is the dictate of common sense to do it. Look at it. Here you are,

in existence ; you cannot help that, even if you should wish to do so. Even if you should so mutilate your body that your lungs could not breathe nor your heart beat, you could not stop being alive. You are alive in a universe governed by certain laws. You did not make the laws, you cannot alter them. You may struggle against them ; it will not make any difference ; you cannot change them. You can break them, and make yourself contemptible and unhappy ; you can obey them, and grow powerful and holy and happy. Walter Aimwell chose to obey.

He is gone forever. It is all over. The story is ended.

And some may say, What does it all signify ? Is it not the same old legend of human life ?—human life coming in like the new tide that swashes among the piers and slaps at the rocks on the shore, and, ebbing again, leaves all as before ?

One day, many centuries ago, human lives *looked* so to the eyes of the royal Israelite. But I suppose Solomon knew, as every other one, whose soul is not in a state of insensibility, knows, that there is a meaning, mysteriously deep, to human passion and aspiration and endeavor. Man knows that, by touching the unseen chords



of a subtle influence, he is joined to a remote universe ; only, freer than the tide, he takes his choice of spheres, and, if he will, allies himself to worlds of brightness and of beauty.

Thus chose Walter Aimwell. And yet, to the casual observer, I think he did not usually seem to be a man of any uncommon grandeur of character, nor appear to be living a life of any special nobleness of purpose. He was one who did not allow himself to be too anxious about the estimation in which he might be held in regard to his abilities or the dignity of his motives. One might have carelessly met him many times, and never have surmised that he was a man of unusual worth ; for, as there was nothing showy in his appearance, there was nothing ostentatious about anything that he did. His dress was plain and devoid of all that was merely ornament. His manners were exceedingly modest, and yet he had so much of the sturdy puritan in his composition that neither persuasion, menace, nor ridicule could dethrone his self-possession or change a well-considered intention. To be truly upright and manly was almost a natural instinct with him ; and when the possibilities of sanctified manhood lay before his mind, bathed in all the glory that the Christian faith pours over it, he was thrilled with ad-

miration, and pressed forward in silent earnestness and enthusiasm. Thus, if I may borrow a phrase from a recent writer, he lived freely and happily among the eternal realities.

His manner of living this earthly life brought essential freedom and happiness to him ; what did it give to the world ?

It gave an example of unblemished purity ; it developed a man who, in the several common relations of life, never fell short of the expectations of his friends. As a son, he so excelled that a mother of very unusual keenness and penetration could say that, so long as he lived with her, he never seemed to have a fault. As a brother, he was sincerely kind. As a husband, he was true and tender. God never made him a father ; but we know how he loved children, and how fervently he sought to benefit them. In friendship he was constant, and ready to sacrifice his own interests and add to his own annoyances that he might relieve the embarrassments of those he loved. As an editor, he was so fair and courteous that he escaped those unpleasant passages that to many seem almost unavoidable. As a man of business, he was forbearing and honorable. As a citizen, he was truly a patriot, strongly conservative in regard to whatever he

esteemed good in government or society, safely radical among the roots of evil. As a professed Christian, he was fervent without being bigoted, and liberal without being lax; he was intellectual without losing faith, and grew in faith without the least appearance of shrivelling in matters of common sense.

His books were much like himself, marked by the same patient thoroughness and real value, without any pretentiousness of style. In building up his own character, and in exerting his influence upon the characters of others, the thought of the poet seemed ever present in his mind, and according to his opportunity, he expressed it in action : —

“In the elder days of art,  
Builders wrought with greatest care  
Each minute and unseen part;  
For the gods see everywhere

“Let us do our work as well,  
Both the unseen and the seen;  
Make the house where gods may dwell  
Beautiful, entire, and clean.”

And yet, as I before intimated, all this was done so modestly that, of the many who had intercourse with him,

few clearly perceived that there was moving among them a genuine artist in human living.

You who have lived near the shore have sometimes looked toward the sea when, its grandeur veiled by a mist from its own bosom, it lay all day vague and insignificant. But at evening, the rays of heaven rent the clouds, and revealed snowy sails and silvery smoke-wreaths and bright flags; and you knew that all day the veiled ocean had been bearing on its strong, steady billows — pulsating as though the great heart of God were in its bosom — ships from all shores, opulent with the best products of all climes.

There are human lives thus dim and vague. But at evening the veil is parted, and we know that through all the unglorified day, purposes, rich with the finest results of all civilization, have been upborne by pulses so strong and holy that we deem them throbbing with the life of God.

THE END.

